Hafa Adai!

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HEINZ, ARNOLD SHOW SUPPORT FOR FITIAL-INOS

From left, Covenant Party's Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos, Republican Rep. Heinz S. Hofschneider, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, and House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios hold hands to show their unity, at the residence of Fitial in Gualo Rai yesterday afternoon. This is the first time the four are seen together in one place since the gubernatorial runoff election on Nov. 23 and right before the Monday inauguration of Fitial and Inos.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

'We want the feds to know we are working together'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

For the first time since the gubernatorial runoff election on Nov. 23, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial of the Covenant Party and Rep. Heinz S. Hofschneider of the Republican Party met yesterday to forge what they described as a "partnership" for the betterment of the CNMI and to show political stability in the face of economic challenges and federalization of labor and immigration.

See FITIAL-INOS on Page 4

AFTER WEEKS OF SILENCE

Heinz: It's time to get over this

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Weeks after his fateful loss to the incumbent governor in the runoff election, Heinz Hofschneider finally broke his silence yesterday, sharing his experience, sentiments, and plans as he exits Commonwealth politics soon.

Despite early revelations of disappointment with the overall result of the election, Hofschneider said that it's time to forget the issue and start working toward a common goal for the CNMI.

"It's time to get over this," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial topped Hofschneider in the runoff elec-

See HEINZ on Page 4

Families separated by miles, years and immigration laws

CHICAGO—When Peter Aldeza first arrived in Illinois from the Philippines, he filed U.S. immigration paperwork to allow his older brother and sister to join him. That was 26 years ago.

See story on Page 12

Another 10-cent hike in gas prices

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Some full-serve gasoline products have now breached the $4-mark, after Shell Marianas increased yesterday its pump prices by 10 cents a gallon.

This is the first gasoline price increase for 2010, and comes a month after Shell, as well as Mobil Oil Mari-

See GAS PRICES on Page 4

NEW SHELL PRICES

SELF-SERVE
Regular unleaded **$3.679** a gallon
Premium unleaded **$3.999** a gallon

FULL-SERVE
Regular unleaded **$3.809** a gallon
Premium unleaded **$4.119** a gallon

Diesel **$3.849** a gallon

A Shell Marianas-Puerto Rico service station display shows the new pump prices of self-serve regular and premium gasoline. Shell hiked its gasoline prices yesterday by 10 cents a gallon, marking the first time this year or a little over a month since the last price change.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Aninon is GTC's Geography Bee champion. **PAGE 3**
Road widening affects SVES arrival, pickup policy. **PAGE 5**

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Do you plan to attend any of the inauguration events scheduled next week?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE

Cold Snap
Snow blankets the Midwest, part of a vicious cold snap engulfing much of the nation.

NATION...Page 10

***Lumpia* Ace**
Lumpia are the high school musicals of finger food: no easy feat, but a definite crowd pleaser.

MAHARLIKA...Page 14

Revamped Idol
'American Idol' thinks young and edgy as it enters its ninth season.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 20

Local

Construction firm says Labor forcing it to hire residents

Labor says company not acting in good faith

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A construction company has complained that it is being singled out by the Department of Labor and forced to hire citizens or permanent residents where none are available or qualified for offered positions.

Misamis Construction (Saipan) Ltd. said that Labor's hold on its Job Vacancy Announcements has caused a log-jam of about 50 to 100 applications that remain pending in the Labor Processing Section.

But Labor's Employment Services contends that Misamis is not acting in good faith, citing the company's inability to fill positions with citizens as "proof" of bad faith conduct.

In his administrative order, Labor administrative hearing officer Jerry Cody determined that either party has not presented facts that will establish with any degree of certainty whether there are citizens who are actually ready, willing, and able to assume the offered positions.

Cody ordered the Labor Employment Services to provide the Hearing Office a list of Misamis' 41 pending JVAs that remain on hold at Employment Services.

Cody also ordered the Labor director to provide the Hearing Office a list of Misamis' renewal applications that remain pending at the Labor Processing Section.

For Misamis, the hearing officer directed the company to post all 41 JVAs on Labor's Web site for a minimum period of 14 days.

"Misamis, as satisfaction of the good faith requirement, is ordered to publish quarter-page advertisements in both the *Saipan Tribune* and *Marianas Variety* newspapers," Cody said, adding that the advertisements shall be published on two consecutive Mondays.

He also ordered the company to post copies of the advertisements at the Workforce Investment Agency, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Adult Development Institute at the Public School System, the Northern Marianas College, and the Marianas Trade Institute.

"As to each JVA for which no citizen or permanent resident applies for the offered job within the 14-day posting period, Employment Services is ordered to certify those JVAs immediately and forward them to the Director of Labor," he said.

Cody said the Labor director shall then take immediate steps to resume processing of the permit application.

"As to each JVA for which a citizen or permanent resident applies for the offered job, Misamis shall either hire the applicant or provide to Employment Services a statement of reasons for the decision not to hire the applicant," he said.

Labor previously barred Misamis from hiring "new" alien workers for one year or until Dec. 17, 2009.

Cody extended the bar for six months or until June 17, 2010, unless compliance has been demonstrated and the hearing officer lifts the bar.

In October 2009, Labor ordered Misamis to pay a $2,000 sanction for not hiring enough local employees and not submitting monthly reports as required by prior Labor orders.

Cody also directed Misamis to continue to hire and employ a minimum of three citizen or permanent resident workers each month.

In the past several months, Labor's Employment Services has refused to certify dozens of JVAs submitted by Misamis in support of pending renewal applications.

In July 2008, an issue arose regarding Misamis's poor record with respect to the hiring of resident workers for its construction business.

On Aug. 12, 2008, Misamis was ordered to demonstrate its "good faith" efforts to meet the "20 percent" requirement by hiring and employing a minimum of three citizens or permanent resident workers every month.

Misamis agreed to these conditions.

In October 2008, Labor's Employment Services again lodged objections against Misamis, asserting that the company was not making good faith efforts to employ citizens or resident workers in its full-time work force.

In December 2008, it was established that Misamis had failed to keep its resident workers fully employed and that workers who Misamis had represented to be employed full-time were being suspended from work or asked to "stand down" for periods of time.

On Dec. 17, 2008, Misamis was sanctioned $1,000 and barred for one year from hiring additional foreign workers in the CNMI.

The order also ordered directed Misamis to continue submitting the monthly "list of local hirings" that had been previously ordered.

In December 2009, Misamis requested a status conference to discuss the issue of its pending JVAs and renewals. At the hearing the company showed it already paid the $2,000 sanction. The company filed all three quarterly compliance statements and attempted to correct issues with regard to its list of local hirings.

Tinian Dynasty prevails in discrimination lawsuit

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A federal court jury has found the owner of Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino not liable to pay for damages sought by a Nepalese worker who had sued the hotel for alleged discrimination in relation to her termination in 2006.

The eight jurors reached a verdict yesterday, finding that Parmila Pariyar failed to prove "by a preponderance of evidence that the expenses associated with her pregnancy was the sole reason for the adverse action she claims [Tinian Dynasty] took against her."

The trial began Tuesday in the U.S. District Court for the NMI, with Chief Judge Alex R. Munson presiding.

Attorney G. Anthony Long is the counsel for Hong Kong Entertainment (Overseas) Investment Ltd. that owns Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino. Attorney Stephen Woodruff served as counsel for Pariyar.

Long told *Saipan Tribune* that there was nothing improper with Tinian Dynasty's decision not to renew Pariyar's contract.

"Tinian Dynasty appreciates the jury listening to the evidence and…deciding the case based on the evidence and the law," Long said.

The plaintiff alleged that she was discriminated against and terminated from her job because of her pregnancy.

Tinian Dynasty hired Pariyar as a casino dealer in February 2002.

On June 29, 2005, Pariyar gave birth to a baby girl at the Commonwealth Health Center, incurring medical expenses, Woodruff said.

Two months later, on Aug. 7, 2005, Pariyar's contract was renewed and Woodruff said that she was even promoted to casino inspector on April 15, 2006.

Soon after Pariyar's renewal and promotion, Tinian Dynasty received the hospital billings from CHC.

On June 21, 2006, the casino general manager called Pariyar to his office and informed her of the non-renewal of her contract.

Woodruff said a Tinian Dynasty official also informed Pariyar that she incurred expensive medical expenses because of her delivery.

Pariyar's contract expired on Aug. 7, 2006.

In an interview yesterday, Long said that non-renewals are never easy business decisions to make.

"But business decisions have to be made. Contract workers don't have a right to renewals," Long said.

Long said Pariyar was not performing satisfactorily as a dealer inspector so she was not renewed when her contract expired. "Her performance after being promoted to a dealer inspector was not satisfactory so her contract was not renewed," he said.

Long said Pariyar was one of 25 employees whose contracts were not renewed between August 2005 to 2006.

Northern Mariana Islands
RETIREMENT FUND

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC, Division 9, §9910, Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Eloy S. Inos, through the NMI Retirement Fund Board of Trustees/Workers' Compensation Commission/Group Health & Life Insurance Trust Fund, are hereby giving notice that the Board of Trustees will hold its ***Special*** meeting **Tuesday, January 12, 2010 at 10:30 a.m.** at the **NMI Retirement Fund Conference Room, Saipan.**

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
A. Call to Order
B. Roll Call
C. Adoption of Agenda

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. OLD BUSINESS
1. Life Insurance RFP

IV. NEW BUSINESS

V. EXECUTIVE SESSION

VI. MISCELLANEOUS
A. Announcements
B. Next Meeting
C. Adjournment

/s/ SIXTO K. IGISOMAR
CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOOK OF TRADITIONAL HEALERS AND MEDICINE HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP), seated, receives two copies of the 370-page Directory of Traditional Healers and Medicinal Plants in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands from members of the Native Medicine Association at his office in Susupe yesterday morning. From left, NMA members Jose S. Roppul, Dr. Elizabeth Rechebei, vice president Lino Olopai, Sablan, Manny Borja, and president Isidoro Cabrera.

US calls on Japan to signal security commitment

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama's top diplomat for East Asia urged Japan on Thursday to make clear that it values continuing security ties with the United States as the two allies spar over the relocation of a U.S. Marine airfield.

The United States and Japan agreed in 2006 to move the base to a less crowded part of the southern Japanese island of Okinawa. But Japan's new government has delayed a final decision on the plan. Many Japanese want the base scrapped and complain about the burden of hosting about 47,000 American troops.

Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell, briefing reporters ahead of a meeting next week between Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada, said that the 50-year-old U.S.-Japan alliance is bigger than just the base issue. He noted Japan's willingness to cooperate with Washington on Afghanistan aid and climate change initiatives.

But, he said, U.S. troops stationed in Japan have kept the region peaceful and allowed Asian economies to thrive.

"The truth is that this is a security alliance at its core, and security issues are important in a complex and changing Asia," Campbell said. "We want a very clear set of statements on the part of the Japanese government on its desire to continue to work closely with us."

The relocation of the Futenma airfield on Okinawa is part of a broader reorganization agreement that also calls for 8,000 Marines and their families to be transferred to the U.S. territory of Guam.

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Happy birthday to Elsie Skang Ngewakl! Enjoy your day, hope all your wishes come true, and may the rich Lord continue to bless you today and always! Greetings come from your loving family and the two "NAB members" Mich "fly-kick", Harl "back-flip" and Jovan.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Angela Aninon is GTC's Geography Bee champion

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Sixth grader Angela Aninon emerged as champion in Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School's Geography Bee competition yesterday, besting nine other students in the challenging rounds.

According to vice principal Martin Dalsaso, 10 finalists competed in the championship round and three emerged as the top winners. Fifth grader Jezreelyn Bulaklak won second place, while sixth grader Patrick Agustin won third place.

The school selected the 10 contestants using a written test administered among fourth to sixth graders early this month. During the competition proper, the 10 contestants went through five rounds to determine the top three finishers, who went on to compete in the championship rounds.

Dalsaso, who was also the contest coordinator, said that Aninon, being the schoolwide champion, would take a written test patterned after the national format that will be sent to the National Geography Bee organizers who have traditionally selected the winners from the Pacific region.

The student from the Pacific who gets the highest score in the written test will represent the region at the National Geography Bee Competition this year. Deadline for the written test is set on Jan. 31.

Scholarship awards await winners of the national contest.

GTC principal Charlotte Camacho and Dalsaso lauded the participation and achievement of all the finalists, which included Aldionne Maglanque, Juan Ke Wen, Angelika Narvaez, Ha'ane Eugenio, Charita Quitano, Ann Ravell, and Darion Jones.

Dalsaso, who described yesterday's event as fun, challenging, and rewarding, said that GTC has been conducting the event in the last four years.

He said the Geography Bee reinforces what students learn in the classroom and spurs interest among learners.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School's Geography Bee competition champion, sixth grader Angela Aninon, is joined by fifth grader Jezreelyn Bulaklak, second place, and sixth grader Patrick Agustin, third placer, after yesterday's competition.

Alien workers' groups, IRs hold 'Appreciation Night' tonight

Several groups of alien workers and those with Immediate Relative status will hold an "Appreciation Night" today, Saturday, 6pm, at the American Memorial Park Amphitheater.

The United Workers Movement-NMI is organizing the event with a theme "Appreciation Night—A Sign of a Strong Unity."

The other organizations supporting the event are the Pilcowa-Pilipino Contract Workers Association, Korean Association, Human Dignity Movement, Bangladesh Cultural Group, Saipan Hindu Community, Chinese Community, Nepalese Community, Indian Community, Saipan City Taxi Association, Bayani, United Filipino Organizations, CNMI Power, and Coalition of United Workers.

"The event is a way of expressing thanks to all of the people who have come together to support and work for improved immigration status by signing the petitions, writing letters, joining the Unity March and participating in many other past assemblies, meetings, forums, and conferences," according to UWM president Rabby Syed.

Syed said the event will be conducted from 6pm to 10pm, during which they will try to create an extraordinary night of fun and entertainment.

He said the highlights will be multi-cultural dances, songs, parlor games for all ages, a magical show, and a film preview of their past activities.

"It's an appreciation night also for the guest worker leaders and members of CNMI community who dedicated their time for the welfare of our co-alien workers," said Syed in a statement.

UHM has been pushing for an improved immigration status for all long-term guest workers in the Commonwealth. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

NORTHERN MARIANAS COLLEGE
Board of Regents
Special Board Meeting
Board of Regents Conference Room, NMC Saipan Campus
Tuesday, January 12, 2010
10:00am

AGENDA

I. Preliminary Matters
A. Roll Call

II. New Business
A. Personnel Matter

III. Executive Session
(At any time during the scheduled meeting the Board of Regents may be required to enter into executive session to discuss matters deemed privileged and confidential)

IV. Adjournment

/s/ Janet Han King
January 8, 2010

2 in fraudulent marriage case plead not guilty

The two persons accused of conspiring to enter into a fake marriage in order to get a "green card" have pleaded not guilty in federal court.

During their arraignment at the U.S. District Court for the NMI yesterday, Crisanto Maderal Olivos and Maria Calipay Maderal Camacho pleaded not guilty to the indictment charging them with conspiring to defraud the U.S. and to commit immigration document fraud, and immigration document fraud.

Olivos appeared with counsel Colin Thompson. Camacho, who is in Guam, appeared through video conference. Assistant Federal Public Defender Richard Arens represented Camacho.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Kirk Schuler represented the U.S. government.

The court imposed a $10,000 unsecured bond for the temporary release of the defendants.

The trial was set for Feb. 22, 2010.

According to the indictment, Olivos, Camacho, and a U.S. citizen conspired to defraud the U.S. by having Olivos, a Filipino, marry the U.S. citizen on Sept. 9, 2005.

The marriage was arranged and witnessed by Camacho, who allegedly paid the U.S. citizen to marry Olivos. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

NEWS BRIEFS

NMC to broadcast inauguration to Rota and Tinian

The Northern Marianas College will be broadcasting the inauguration ceremony of Gov. Benigno Fitial and Lt. Gov. Eloy Inos from the Saipan World Resort on Monday, Jan. 11, 2010, beginning at 3pm to Rota and Tinian.

The live broadcast will be shown at the NMC instructional sites on Rota and Tinian, and the community is invited to attend. Seats will be available on a first-come, first-served basis, so please arrive early.

The live broadcast is made possible by a grant from the Administration for Native Americans and strong support from IT&E. ***(NMC)***

EMO warns of high surf, rip currents

The Emergency Management Office issued a high surf advisory yesterday due to an increasing north swell that is expected to produce hazardous surf on north facing reefs through the weekend.

The advisory will be in effect from 6pm last night to 6am Monday, primarily along north facing reefs.

The National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, has also issued a high surf advisory for north facing reefs that will be in effect up to 6am Monday.

"High surf will affect exposed reefs and beaches, producing dangerous rip currents. Expect hazardous surf of 7 to 9 feet through Monday morning on north facing reefs," EMO said.

The public is advised to avoid venturing near exposed reefs and beaches, especially those facing north as rip currents will be life threatening. ***(EMO)***

Air Force sets training exercises on FDM

SANTA RITA, Guam—The U.S. Air Force will conduct live-fire and laser training exercises on the island of Farallon de Medinilla on Jan. 12, from 8am to 9pm, and Jan. 13, from 8am to 4pm.

The general location of this activity will be on the island of Farallon de Medinilla Training Area on a 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants. The public, especially fisherman, commercial pilots and marine tour operators, are advised to stay clear from this area during the times and dates indicated.

Farallon de Medinilla plays a special and unique role in national defense because its location provides access frequency that supports established training requirements. In addition, the air and sea space in the Farallon provides sufficient room for the many different attack profiles necessary to replicate training opportunities in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
State Board of Education
Public School System
P. O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
PSS RFP 09-042

"PSS ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION: JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITIES INSTRUCTOR"

The CNMI Public School System is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from individuals or firms interested **"TO PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES TO STUDENTS IN THE JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITY."** The scope of work is available beginning January 8, 2010 at the PSS Procurement & Supply Office located on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950.

Questions must be in writing and addressed to Ms. Jackie Quitugua, ACIS via fax to 670.664.3796 or e-mailed to jackiequitugua@gmail.com no later than January 26, 2010.

Proposals shall be in a sealed envelope marked "RFP 09-042" containing (1) original and three (3) copies and submitted to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office no later than January 29, 2010 at 10:30 A.M. Any proposal submitted after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted.

/s/ Rita A. Sablan, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Education

/s/ Robert Florian
P&S Officer

Inaugural events kick off today

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Preparations for the inauguration of Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos, as well as those for the 17th Legislatures, the mayors of Saipan, Tinian, Rota and Northern Islands go into high gear today.

Kicking off the inaugural events is a golf tournament this morning at Lao Lao Bay Golf Resort for the governor and lieutenant governor, and a 5pm inaugural Red Mass for the 17th Senate and 17th House of Representatives, at the Mount Carmel Cathedral in Chalan Kanoa.

Outgoing and incoming members of the Legislature have been racing against time the past few days to get their office stuff in or out of their offices in time for the swearing in of the 17th Legislatures on Monday.

A Red Mass at 2pm tomorrow also at the Mount Carmel Cathedral will be held for the governor and lieutenant governor, as well as for the Northern Islands mayor.

Fitial, who founded the Covenant Party, is only the second governor to be re-elected in CNMI history; the first one was former Republican Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio. He won the first gubernatorial runoff election in the history of the Northern Marianas.

He and Inos, the first appointed lieutenant governor in CNMI history before he was elected to office last year, will be sworn in by CNMI Superior Court Associate Judge Perry Inos at 3pm Monday at the Saipan World Resort in Susupe.

Following the inauguration is an invitation-only, black tie VIP Ball at 6pm also at the Saipan World Resort in Susupe.

At the same time, a suit-and-tie People's Ball will be held at the Fiesta Resort in Garapan.

Fitial is the first—and probably the only—CNMI governor who will serve a five-year term as a result of a newly ratified initiative requiring general elections to be held only on even-numbered years. Anyone who succeeds him will go back to serving a four-year term.

Legislature, Saipan mayor

The official inaugural Web site, www.beneloy.com, also lists other inaugural activities for the 17th Legislatures and the mayors of Saipan, Rota, Tinian and Northern Islands.

At 8am on Monday, the Saipan mayor will take his oath of office.

An hour later at 9am, the Northern Islands mayor will also take her oath of office.

At 10am, the 17th Senate and the 17th House of Representatives will separately hold their inaugural session at the Legislative Building on Capital Hill.

Tinian, Rota

The inaugural Red Mass for the Rota mayor will be on Jan. 13, Wednesday, 9am, at the San Francisco De Borja Church on Rota. The inaugural ball will be held at 7pm at the Rota Resort in As Puladan.

For the Tinian Mayor, the Red Mass will be held on Jan. 15, Friday, 8am, at the San Jose Catholic Church on Tinian.

The inaugural ceremony for the Tinian mayor will be held two hours later, 10am, at the Main Pavilion at Kammer Beach in San Jose, Tinian. This will be followed by a reception and entertainment at 12 noon. Dinner will also be served at 6:30pm.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

A legislative staffer races against time to remove personal items from an outgoing lawmaker's office at the Legislative Building on Capital Hill yesterday, in time for Monday's organizational session of the 17th House of Representatives and 17th Senate.

GAS PRICES

From Page 1

anas, hiked their pump prices, also by 10 cents a gallon, on Dec. 4 and 7 respectively.

Mobil service stations surveyed yesterday afternoon showed no price changes yet but the two oil giants usually mirror each other's price changes in a matter of days.

At Shell service stations, a self-serve regular unleaded gasoline now costs $3.679 a gallon, while a full-serve regular unleaded gasoline now costs $3.809 a gallon.

Self-serve V-Power or premium unleaded gasoline is now $3.999 a gallon at Shell service stations, while full-serve V-Power unleaded gasoline now costs $4.119 a gallon.

Diesel fuel at Shell service stations is now pegged at $3.849 a gallon, after a 10-cent hike.

Shell and Mobil do not issue advance notice of any pump price increase on Saipan. The oil giants, however, are prompt in changing the price displays at their service stations.

Since February 2009, Saipan motorists have seen eight rounds of pump price increases. This means that for the 12-month period, motorists have paid an additional 95 cents or almost a dollar for every gallon of gas they put in their vehicles.

In the U.S. on Monday, crude oil closed at $81.51 a barrel, the highest on the New York Mercantile Exchange since Oct. 9, 2008. Analysts also say the cold weather hiked demand for natural gas.

HEINZ

From Page 1

tion by 370 votes—a result that Hofschneider described as "disappointing."

At 1:45pm yesterday, the four top political faces on island gathered for the first time in what can be described as their first "reunion" after the historic Nov. 23 runoff polls.

Hofschneider, along with Arnold Palacios, were seen having a chat with their former political opponents, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Gov. Eloy Inos, at the governor's residence on Gualo Rai.

Saipan Tribune learned Fitial and Inos made the first move to visit Hofschneider yesterday morning at his home, asking him to set aside politics and seek his support for the administration. The group then continued their talks at the governor's house, as witnessed by the *Saipan Tribune.*

The four also asked to be photographed together as testament to the start of their "partnership."

Still committed

Hofschneider disclosed that as soon as he exits politics next week, he would take a few months to rest.

He assured, though, that he will be enjoying his rest on island while thinking of the best possible way to be still of help to the community.

"I may run the family business," he said, adding that "anything that comes along the way, I will work on it."

Hofschneider said he remains committed toward helping the community to the best of his abilities. "The most important thing now is to keep helping our people and if I can, in any way, I will be supportive of whatever will improve their lives. I am very much willing to do that," he said.

Irregularities

Hofschneider's camp had earlier expressed intention to challenge the poll results and he confirmed this yesterday.

"It was a disappointing result for us because we noted many irregularities during the election. There were very significant wrongdoings…by the Election Commission," he said without elaborating.

However, their plan to challenge the result was hampered by the "timeframe."

"We're only given 10 days under the law…and our counsel thought that we did't have enough time to present a good case to the court," he said.

Hofschneider said he will rest his case, at least for now.

He pointed out, though, that running for public office is not out of his plans yet.

When asked if he still wants to become the next governor of the CNMI, Hofschneider said: "If people still think that my ideas are still needed then I would like the people to give that indication that I should come back to politics."

"I just want to tell the community that we need to search within our hearts. Find what is important, to come together as a community and work toward the same goals," he said.

Hofschneider is optimistic that any "irregularities" and "wrongdoings" would be corrected by the Election Commission for the betterment of future CNMI elections.

FITIAL-INOS

From Page 1

The meeting between Fitial and Hofschneider, along with their running mates, Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos and House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios, came shortly before Fitial and Inos' inauguration on Monday, 3pm, at the Saipan World Resort in Susupe.

Hofschneider also personally congratulated the Fitial-Inos ticket for the first time since he and Palacios lost the first CNMI gubernatorial runoff election by 370 votes in November.

"We want the feds to know we're working together," Fitial told *Saipan Tribune* as he, Inos, Palacios and Hofschneider gathered at the poolside of Fitial's private residence in Gualo Rai, overlooking Saipan's majestic lagoon.

The CNMI receives millions of dollars in federal grants and program funding.

Federal officials were invited, and confirmed attendance, to the Fitial-Inos inauguration. They include Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs at the Interior Tony M. Babauta, and Office of Insular Affairs Director Nik Pula. The U.S. Department of the Interior has jurisdiction over U.S. insular areas such as the CNMI, Guam, American Samoa, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Fitial's inauguration also comes weeks after the federal government took control of CNMI immigration on Nov. 28, marking another chapter in the islands' sometimes tumultuous relationship with the United States in 34 years.

At stake is the CNMI government's united stand on the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's interim final rule on the CNMI transitional worker program, as well as millions more in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding.

Fitial, Inos, Hofschneider and Palacios arrived at Fitial's residence at 1:45pm yesterday and headed straight to the poolside. They allowed themselves to be photographed and interviewed briefly.

"We wish nothing but success for the Fitial administration as they face the challenges of the Commonwealth," Palacios said, adding that he and Hofschneider's visit show their support for the Fitial administration.

After their photos were taken, Hofschneider immediately left the poolside but granted a media interview away from Fitial, Inos and Palacios. ***(See sidebar)***

"The political season is over. This is a time for partnership for the people of the CNMI," Inos said.

Palacios, who stayed behind to chat some more with Fitial and Inos, said he will be attending the governor and lieutenant governor's inauguration on Monday.

Fitial and Hofschneider had different and sometimes clashing stands on issues such as federalization, pension system, running the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and the Commonwealth Health Center, invigorating the CNMI economy, and managing the islands' limited resources.

During Fitial's first term in office, the 16th House of Representatives was dominated by Republicans under Palacios' term.

Now that the 17th Legislature will also take their oath of office on Monday, it will be dominated by those aligned with the Fitial administration.

In the 20-member House, there will be nine Republicans and only seven Covenant Party members. The four independents, however, aligned themselves with the Covenant Party, giving them the upper hand.

During the four-way gubernatorial race in the Nov. 7 general elections, the Hofschneider-Palacios ticket won by eight votes over the Fitial-Inos tandem, the closest in CNMI history.

But because none of the candidates got at least 50 percent plus one of the votes cast and counted, a runoff election had to be conducted as required by a new law.

When the remaining absentee ballots were counted on Dec. 7, Fitial-Inos sealed their victory in the Nov. 23 runoff with a total of 6,610 votes versus the 6,240 votes that Hofschneider-Palacios got.

Road widening affects SVES arrival, pickup policy

The San Vicente Elementary School will be changing its arrival and pickup policy effective Monday, Jan. 11, 2010, to ensure the safety of its students.

In a notice issued to parents yesterday, acting principal Joaquina Dlg. Salas and acting vice principal Betty Miller said that construction to widen the road in front of San Vicente School will result in a new four-lane highway that will extend right up to the school gate.

"This means the drop off and pick up area at the basketball court and in front of the school will be eliminated. Therefore, parents will not be able to safely park in front of the school, or across the road, and escort their child on campus," they said in the notice.

As a result, Salas and Miller said there will be no student entrance from the front of the campus, and the gates will remain locked effective Monday, Jan. 11. The main parking area will remain reserved for bus drop off and staff parking only.

"*All* car riding students *must* be dropped off and picked up at the gates along the side of the school. Please be reminded our gates open at 7am and traffic flow is *one way* going down in the mornings and afternoons. This roadway is narrow and parking is limited. It will be very difficult for parents to continue to park and walk their child to class," said Salas and Miller.

At this time in the school year, they said most students should be able to find their way to the classroom without guidance. "If you feel your child still needs assistance, please notify the office and we will make arrangements for someone to escort your child. If you absolutely must park and enter campus in the morning, please ensure your car is not in any way impeding the roadway," they said.

Students who are going to eat breakfast may be dropped at the gate directly behind the cafeteria; students with written waivers to be dropped prior to 7am may be dropped at this gate as well. All other students should be dropped at the gate at the bottom of the hill.

"We apologize for the inconvenience, short notice, and change in policy in the middle of the school year. However, this matter is completely beyond the control of school administration. We ask your cooperation and assistance in ensuring every student at San Vicente School remains safe throughout this construction process," said Salas and Miller. ***(PR)***

Carroll returns to Saipan IUMC as its lay pastor

The Immanuel United Methodist Church in Chalan Konoa will have a new pastor on Jan. 24, 2010. Millie Carroll is returning to serve as Lay Pastor of IUMC, founded by Rev. Barbara Grace Ripple in 1994. Her appointment is by United Methodist Bishop Mary Ann Swenson, California-Pacific Annual Conference.

"I'm humbled but feel very excited, happy and honored to again be with the wonderful people of IUMC," Carroll said. "It's a great privilege to serve IUMC, a church which welcomes *everyone* of all ages, of all marriage status, of all partner selection."

Carroll

In 2003-2005, her main focus at IUMC was developing Sunday School and activities for children; developing religious dance for adults and children; and counseling. "Worship, Sunday School, and all activities need to feel alive with participation opportunities for all ages. Services will often include puppets and dance," she said.

Carroll feels the facility and location in Chalan Konoa is excellent. "And the small congregation will give present and new members the opportunity to 'Mold the Church We've Always Hoped For' as we grow spiritually and physically. Very seldom do members and pastors have such an opportunity."

"We want strong focus on caring for each other and serious issues facing our members, but want to be helpful on problems affecting all of Saipan and the wider world. IUMC has tried to follow United Methodism's strong combination of worship, evangelism and social service," Carroll said.

Saipan social outreach has primarily been providing baby layettes for CHC newborns, assistance on contract employees' issues and shelter for emotionally/physically abused women. Internationally, most of IUMC's financial and spiritual help has been for children—for education in poor mountainous area of China, typhoon victims in the Philippines, earthquake victims in Indonesia, problems in Malawi, and war orphans in Iraq.

Carroll hopes her social work experience while a UMC missionary in Hong Kong, hunger/homeless work in New York City, and peace work in both places will be useful in IUMC's outreach.

"Especially my 25 Hong Kong years taught me even small groups of people can accomplish huge changes. One was finally (through a 10-year campaign) convincing the government to change from providing education to less than half 1st-9th graders to providing free education for all. Providing shelters for emotionally/physically abused women, providing more adequate housing and social welfare benefits, and increased voting privileges were among other key accomplishments of the groups I had the privilege to work in. Really, when other have problems, aren't those problems ours as well?"

Carroll is looking forward to again working closely with the Korean Immanuel UMC in Koblerville. "Pastor Myung Taek Lee and the congregation warmly hosted our Immanuel UMC for many years until we obtained present space in Chalan Kanoa."

"There are so many similarities among religions on Saipan. Like Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and the Baha'i faith are each based on love and caring for others. I hope we'll have close relations with each and also with other Christian denominations. Just think what we could accomplish if all religions and denominations focused on common problems!"

"I firmly believe war is not an answer to solving world problems and hope IUMC will take a stand for peace and simultaneously reach out to military families with their huge burdens while loved ones are in Iraq and Afghanistan. I hope IUMC will stand for peace, justice and equality for all."

During marriage equality hearings in June 2004, Carroll represented IUMC and was the only church representative who supported the right of marriage for all.

Although multinational, services are in English. Carroll joins others at IUMC in warmly welcoming all to the multi-aged worship service on Jan. 24 at 9am.

IUMC in Chalan Kanoa is on Chalan Kanoa Street and Barbara Avenue (east of Town Center and Beach Road, near the Catholic Cathedral. For further information, call 322-6158 after Jan. 21. ***(PR)***

$9.4M OIA grant for various projects in A. Samoa

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Department of the Interior's Insular Assistant Secretary Tony Babauta signed a capital improvement grant in the amount of $9,383,000 to assist American Samoa with specific capital improvements as detailed in the American Samoa Five-Year Capital Improvements Master Plan.

Section 118 (c)(3) of Public Law 104-134 refers to the master plan by saying "the specific projects to be funded in American Samoa shall be set forth in a five-year plan for infrastructure assistance developed by the Secretary of the Interior in consultation with the American Samoa Government and updated annually.

"I am pleased to support Governor Togiola and the priorities of his administration," said Babauta. "This funding will go to projects in health, education, water and solid waste improvements, international ports and public safety, areas in which we are committed to assisting the people of American Samoa and our other insular areas."

Some of the projects listed as priorities in the American Samoa CIP grant include completion of an electrical upgrade at the LBJ Medical Center, design and renovation of the Intensive Care Unit and Other Units, construction of a 15-classroom building that includes offices at Leone High School, various school office renovations, purchase of school equipment and furniture, purchase of school buses, improvement of American Samoa Power Authority's SCADA computer monitoring system, install a new water storage tank in the Tafuna area, design and construct an Energy-from-Waste facility, provide matching funds for FAA projects at the airport, begin construction of the newly designed (design is pending) service wharf, and renovate the West Police Substation. ***(PR)***

'SINE DIE' HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

From left, Senate President Pete P. Reyes (R-Saipan), Senate Vice President Felix Mendiola (Cov-Rota), and Sen. Maria "Frica" Pangelinan (D-Saipan) pose for a photo at Pangelinan's office where she served lunch for her colleagues and staff right after the 16th Senate adjourned sine die on Wednesday. The 17th Legislature will have its organizational sessions on Monday, 10am, on Capital Hill.

Fishing group cleans up Garapan Fishing Base

Members and volunteers from the Saipan Fishermen's Association cleaned up the beach at the Garapan Fishing Base Complex on Dec. 5, 2009. The group's work yielded a total of 650 lbs of trash and debris. SFA undertook the beach cleanup as part of the Division of Environmental Quality's Monthly Brigade Clean-up.

"This collaborative cleanup activity demonstrates the Association's commitment to the protection and enhancement of the Commonwealth's fragile island ecosystem," noted SFA president Gene Weaver. "The SFA is committed to preserving the environment, and this is one way in which we can protect our island and the ocean."

"We are always delighted to see local groups pitch in to help keep our islands clean," said Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Perry Tenorio. "A pristine environment is important to our tourism industry, but it is vital to our island's future."

SFA Beautification co-chair Karrie Fernandez said they intend to increase the number of participants in future cleanups. For more information about the SFA and how to volunteer, contact Frank Tudela at 1(670) 664-3200/01 or ftudela@mymarianas.com. ***(MVA)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Cheerful Saipan Fishermen's Association members and friends show some of the 650 lbs. of trash collected during a beach cleanup in December 2009 on Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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EDITORIAL

An investment to end smoking

The nation's battle against smoking and its many health-related perils has had more ups and downs than a patient fever chart: Tobacco revenues go up, but government spending on antismoking programs declines, as smoking rates creep up.

The challenge is to drive those numbers in the right direction to improve public health.

But on the heels of the first reported increase in smoking in a decade—driven mostly by younger smokers—comes a study documenting that states see the benefits of antismoking programs and are trying to maintain funding.

Pennsylvania unfortunately was singled out as one of the states making large cuts last year in antismoking efforts amid the budget crisis, according to the study, done for the American Heart Association and other health advocacy groups.

That's the wrong path to take on such a key public-health issue, especially at a time of record revenues from tobacco taxes and continuing payouts from the 1998 tobacco settlement. Moreover, the growing number of states with indoor smoking bans provides a golden opportunity to piggyback antismoking efforts so that more people quit.

Just under 21 percent of all adults smoke, representing about 46 million people. That's up from nearly 20 percent in 2007.

So it's at least good news that one New England state serving as a testing ground for the near-universal health care being debated in Congress is documenting remarkable success in cutting smoking by its poorest residents.

By providing low-cost smoking-cessation treatments to Medicaid recipients, Massachusetts health officials cut smoking rates in this population by more than 25 percent.

The steep drop from 38 percent of poor Massachusetts residents smoking to about 28 percent last year—representing 30,000 fewer smokers—is impressive proof that concerted antismoking efforts can have a big payoff.

A few states offer Medicaid recipients stop-smoking benefits; good to see Pennsylvania among them. But so far only Massachusetts officials report such an impressive drop in smoking among Medicaid recipients.

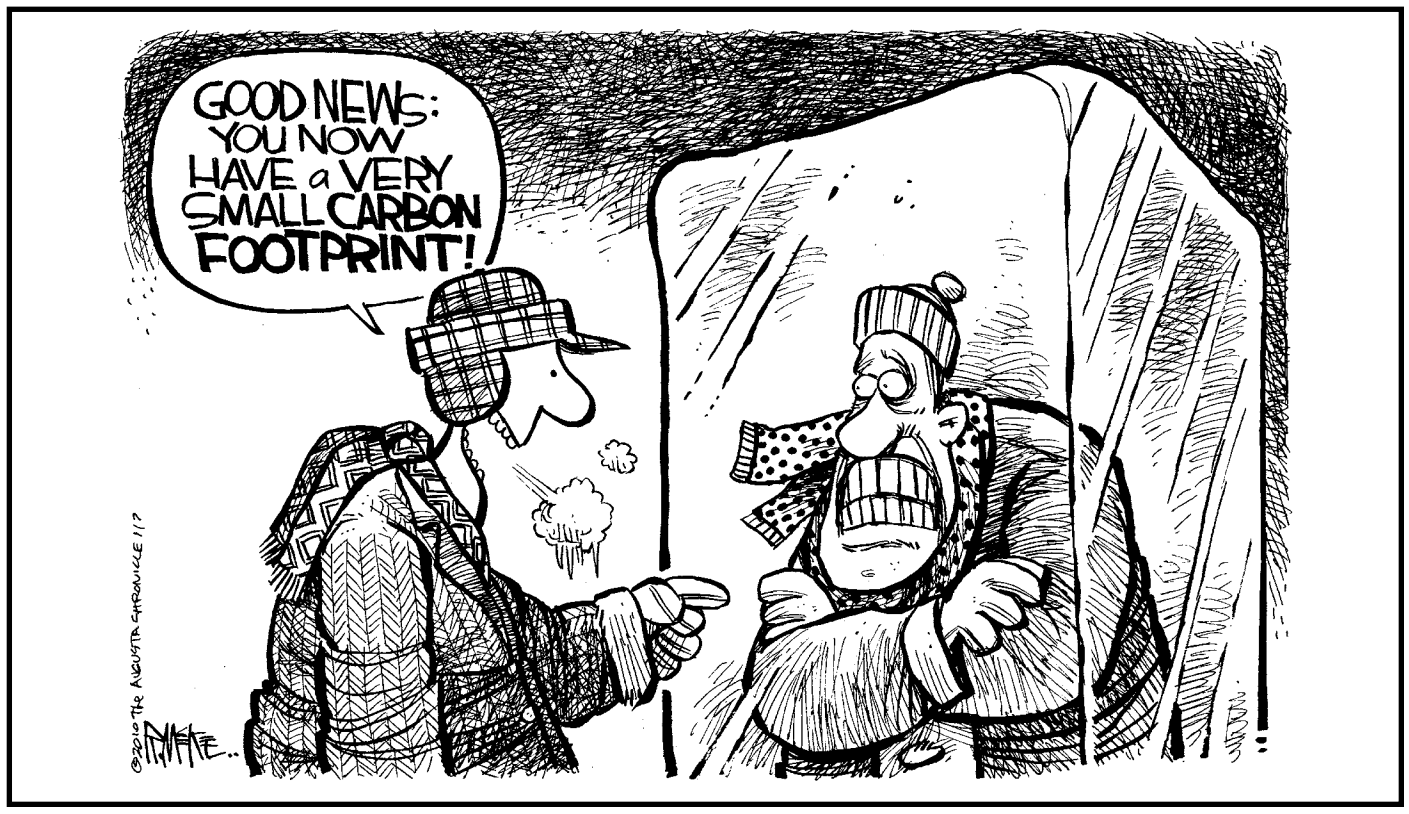
The state offers low-income smokers up to six months of counseling and access to smoking-cessation medications. That sort of aggressive approach may account for their success.

Among smokers in general, their cessation efforts frequently fail the first few times. As the old joke goes, quitting must be easy since so many smokers have done it over and over again.

With more teens and young adults acquiring the deadly habit every year—in large part, due to the industry's $12.5 billion annual ad budget—the price of slacking off on antismoking efforts is steep. Some 440,000 Americans die annually from smoking-related illnesses, a toll in human suffering as well as a drag on the nation's economic prospects with associated health-care costs and lost productivity.

As Congress looks for ways to tame health costs, it would be wise to include new Medicaid coverage for antismoking efforts. Meanwhile, state health officials would be smart to replicate the Massachusetts effort by extending stop-smoking initiatives to as many citizens as possible.

(c) 2009, The Philadelphia Inquirer



Top overused phrases of 2009

By CAROLINE BAUM
(c) 2009, Bloomberg News

Caroline Baum, author of Just What I Said, *is a* Bloomberg News *columnist.*

NEW YORK—For journalists, pundits and comedians, the end of the year provides an opportunity to look back, fantasize forward and let the creative juices flow.

We churn out 10 Best and 10 Worst lists. We reprise the year's most memorable moments and worst embarrassments. We reflect on famous people and infamous scallywags, current events and eventful currents, the highest highs and lowest lows.

When I started to think about 2009, it wasn't events that came to mind but words and phrases: trite, overused words and phrases, such as "new normal," "unprecedented," and "exit strategy."

One picture may be worth a thousand words, but one word can unleash a year's worth of memories.

1 'New normal'

In May 2009, the folks at PIMCO emerged from their secular outlook forum to codify their forecast for slower growth, increased regulation and a decreased role for the U.S. in the global economy as the "new normal."

They weren't the first. Back in 2001, Warren Buffett and John Bogle warned of a new normal of single-digit stock market returns. A book by that name was published in 2004, spawning a companion Web site (http://www.thenewnormal.com).

As it turns out, the phrase has applications in almost every field: technology (its transformative power); science (American women are getting fatter); medicine (early puberty for girls); management (constant change is the new normal, according to the Harvard Business Review); and higher education (less financial support from state budgets and endowments).

As a way of describing the U.S. economy, the new normal has merit. ObamaNation is looking at bigger government, more regulation and an aging population commanding more resources.

Unfortunately, overuse has rendered new normal meaningless.

2 'Unprecedented'

If the events of 2008 and policy response were unprecedented, the post-mortems in 2009 drove the point home—ad nauseam.

From the collapse in home prices to the government's co- option of mortgage finance; from the freezing up of financial markets to the failure of big and small firms; from the efforts by the Treasury and Federal Reserve to keep the ship of state afloat to the government's ownership stake in the private sector: Everything, it seems, was unprecedented.

The inauguration of the first black president was unprecedented. Barack Obama, hailed as an agent of change, pledged to change the way Washington operates.

Eleven months into Obama's presidency, Washington is probably the only entity to eschew the new normal (see No. 1 above) for more of the same.

3 'Exit Strategy'

Everyone needs an exit strategy. Just ask Jenny Sanford, wife of the philandering South Carolina governor, and Mrs. Tiger Woods.

The Fed needs an exit strategy following a period of unprecedented (see No. 2 above) accommodation. Policy makers have enunciated one without a timetable for implementation.

The central bank plans to whittle down its balance sheet by natural attrition, terminating emergency lending facilities and selling assets or draining reserves on a temporary basis. It can raise the interest rate it pays on reserves to prevent excess credit expansion, an idea that may work better in theory than in practice.

Unlike the Fed, the U.S. military has a date for leaving Afghanistan and no real exit strategy. President Barack Obama said the U.S. will start the transfer of authority to the Afghans in July 2011. His National Security Adviser, General James Jones, admitted the U.S. will be in the region "for a long time."

Or, in Fed parlance, "an extended period."

4 'Green Shoots'

"I do see green shoots," Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke told CBS's "60 Minutes" last March, a forecast worthy of Chauncey Gardiner, the child-like sage in Jerzy Kosinski's "Being There." ("There will be growth in the spring," Chance said.)

Pretty soon everyone was going green. The media sent out reconnaissance teams. Economists incorporated green shoots into their forecasts. It was a veritable garden of foliage sightings.

The shoots matured and produced blooms in the third quarter. The U.S. economy expanded at a 2.2 percent annualized rate following four consecutive quarterly declines.

All this flora talk was starting to get to a friend of mine. "If the leaves would just stop falling, I could see the green shoots," he said.

5 'Uncertainty'

Uncertainty gained a new cachet in 2009 and in certain circles, especially those responsible for setting policy. The frequency with which the Fed and European Central Bank use uncertainty to qualify the forecast leads one to believe uncertainty is unique to bad times.

It isn't. A little more uncertainty about the degree to which the subprime crisis was "contained" and a little less "irrational exuberance" over condo-flipping, and we might not be in the shape we're in.

6 'Historic Opportunity'

Historic opportunities were a dime a dozen this year. Obama seized some of them (embracing Islam with a speech in Cairo), squandered others (refusing to meet with the Dalai Lama before his visit to Beijing) and had to settle for a photo-op in still others (the Copenhagen climate summit).

The biggest historic opportunity still lies ahead: health-care reform.

The Senate is expected to pass its health-care bill as soon as tomorrow on a 60-40 party line vote. The House and Senate must then reconcile their different versions.

The more the American people know, the less they like the idea. This may be one historic opportunity Obama will wish he missed.

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An unfortunate interpretation

By PAUL A. MANGLONA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Paul A. Manglona is a senator in the 16th Legislature, representing the First Senatorial District of Rota. He is the presumptive Senate President in the incoming 17th Legislature.

Following the CNMI Supreme Court's order last week concerning the Rota election contest (*Hocog and Manglona v. Mendiola et al.*, 2009 MP 20), there has been a lot of confusion about the Legislature's intent in passing Public Laws 16-38 and 16-43. Briefly, the Court found that the Commonwealth Election Commission failed to comply with the two election laws and ordered ballots in races for the First Senatorial District to be recounted—a decision that produced precisely the same result as at the general election. I am troubled by this decision and appreciate this opportunity to explain my position.

Among other things, P.L. 16-38 and P.L. 16-43 changed some CNMI vote-counting procedures. As the author of Public Law 16-38, I feel it is necessary to clarify my intent—and what I believe was the intent of the Legislature—in enacting these changes. First, Public Law 16-38 was enacted to "allow the Commonwealth Election Commission [CEC] to more *effectively and efficiently administer* absentee voting . . ." [§1 Findings and Purpose]. Its purpose is to empower, not tie the hands of CEC. Second, the House committee that reviewed P.L. 16-38 stated that the law will "*allow* the First and Second Senatorial Districts to *tabulate local ballots prior to shipment* . . ." [House Comm. Report 16-70, at 2]. This, in my view, gives CEC officials the ability to tally votes from local polling places before they are sent to Saipan. Finally, in Senate debate prior to the enactment of P.L. 16-38 I stated: "It is very important [to pass this legislation] because every election year on Election Day our people would wait from 10:00 in the evening expecting the results to come in, but they do not get the results until 7:00 in the morning the next day." [Senate Journal 16-28, 2/11/09, at 7]. I could not have been any clearer that a faster counting process was our objective.

It has never been the intent of the Legislature to impose unreasonable duties upon CEC. P.L. 16-38 and P.L. 16-43 require ballots to be preliminarily counted "in the senatorial district *in which* they were cast." [1 CMC §6524(d)(2)]. The Court construed this as "all votes will eventually end up in the district *for which* they are cast" [2009 MP 20 ¶11] and accordingly ordered all ballots cast in the election to be re-counted (some for the third time) on Rota. The difference between the statute and the court's opinion is more than word choice. While all votes cast *for* Rota races could include the total ballots cast in the election, all votes cast *in* Rota is a smaller subset, and at the very least does not include absentee ballots mailed to Saipan. Under this reading, the Court's opinion is in direct conflict with legislative intent.

As CEC pointed out in comments on P.L. 16-38—which are part of the legislative record—there is neither an office nor a regular staff assigned to Tinian or Rota, and a full vote count is not logistically feasible. Moreover, at the time the local counting requirement of P.L. 16-38 was adopted, absentee ballots were not due until 14 days after a general election. It was only later, with the adoption of P.L. 16-43, that an Election Day deadline was imposed (in order to expedite the runoff process). How then, could P.L. 16-38 *possibly* intend to have absentee ballots sent to Rota as part of a *preliminary* count? In essence, the Court is saying that P.L. 16-38 required gathering ballots cast at the Rota polls, *waiting two weeks*, sending absentee ballots from Saipan down to Rota, counting them together with poll ballots, then sending all ballots back to Saipan to be counted again. This is not a sensible approach to election administration. It is also the equivalent of *two final* counts, not one preliminary and one final count. At the very least it isn't *efficient administration* to fly absentee ballots from Saipan to Rota to conduct a full count, then fly all ballots back to Saipan to conduct an identical count. The reasonable reading of the two laws, therefore, is that votes cast at the Tinian and Rota polls, and *not* votes which are cast elsewhere, should be locally tallied and then brought to Saipan to be added to the total. This practice gives Tinian and Rota voters a good idea of how candidates are doing without bringing the tabulation process to a halt while ballots are flown here, there, and everywhere.

I feel I must point out that the Court's reference to the CEC post office boxes on Tinian and Rota is also misconstrued. The boxes are not part of a system for counting all ballots locally. Rather, they were established to allow residents with last-minute off-island business to vote a day or two before the election without the need to mail ballots to Saipan, where they would most likely arrive too late. Without such a provision, Public Law 16-43 would have the undesirable effect of disenfranchising this group of voters entirely. The box system was also put in place to secure a voting process that has historically been subject to tampering and other mischief.

In my view, the changes to our voting procedures were intended to promote the efficient counting of votes by giving flexibility to the Commission and allowing for a preliminary count of votes cast at the Tinian and Rota polls before they are shipped to Saipan for an overall tally. This is a sensible reading of the law. Sadly, it is a far cry from the interpretation in the Court's order, a dangerous precedent that rejects efficient election administration in favor of a fanciful and time-consuming tabulation process. This decision could cost the taxpayers thousands of dollars down the road, money that—if yesterday's recount results are an indicator—will be squandered. I am disheartened by the opinion in *Hocog* and will work to rectify this unfortunate result in the 17th Legislature.

The secret to creating jobs

By JAMES SHERK
The Heritage Foundation

James Sherk is the Bradley fellow in labor policy at The Heritage Foundation. Readers may write to the author in care of The Heritage Foundation, 214 Massachusetts Avenue NE, Washington, D.C. 20002; Web site: www.heritage.org.

Politicians in Washington are talking a lot about creating jobs. Their dark secret is that none of them know how to do it.

Look at the centerpiece of President Obama's newest proposal: spending billions on home weatherization. If the president had better ideas for creating jobs, he would have proposed them.

In fairness, no one should blame Obama for lacking a good plan to create jobs. No president—Democrat or Republican—could do much better.

Consider where jobs come from. An entrepreneur has an idea. Investors provide that entrepreneur with funding. The entrepreneur then hires workers to help put his idea into action. If the business competes successfully, those jobs last.

A decade ago, two graduate students at Stanford, Larry Page and Sergy Brin, had an idea for a better way to search the Internet. They persuaded venture capitalists to invest $25 million in their new company: Google Inc. Today millions of Americans use Google, and 20,000 employees work there. Page and Brin's successful idea created thousands of jobs.

Of course, no one knows what business ideas will work before an entrepreneur tries them. Google might not have succeeded. Remember Pets.com? The economy works through decentralized trial and error as millions of entrepreneurs try to make their ideas work.

During this recession, however, this entrepreneurial activity has slowed. Job creation has fallen by 25 percent since the recession began, much more than the 15 percent increase in job losses. The credit crunch and the uncertainty of the recession have made starting new businesses less rewarding and more difficult. Unemployment has doubled primarily because fewer entrepreneurs now take the risk of putting their ideas into action.

That's why President Obama can't create jobs. What politician could come up with even 20 good business ideas, much less the tens of thousands needed to get millions of Americans back to work? No one person has that expertise.

The president can help create a business environment that encourages entrepreneurship. Or he can create an environment that discourages it. Unfortunately Obama has chosen the latter path.

Many longstanding liberal policy goals make businesses less profitable. Rather than holding off on this agenda until the economy recovers, however, Obama and congressional Democrats have pressed full speed ahead. They have chosen to advance their ideological goals at the expense of entrepreneurship and job creation.

The health care bills in Congress raise taxes on employers while making health coverage (i.e., employees) more expensive. The Environmental Protection Agency has announced it intends to begin regulating carbon dioxide—that would make energy more expensive. What does that do to the incentive to start a business?

The $787 billion spent on the stimulus has also reduced private business investment. The more resources Washington consumes, the fewer businesses can use for their own projects. For each 100 public jobs the government creates, 150 private sector jobs disappear. Obama's spending has deprived many entrepreneurs of the funding to expand their businesses.

The fact that the House just passed a second stimulus tacitly concedes that the first one failed. But doubling down on more spending won't encourage entrepreneurs to start or expand businesses. So it will also fail. This means a long, slow, jobless recovery for American workers.

Just to keep pace with population growth, employers must create 100,000 jobs a month. Obama's attempts to centrally plan a recovery with government spending will mean long months on the unemployment rolls for many workers.

If Obama wants to create jobs, he should start by admitting that no president knows how to do it himself. Instead he should pass policies that encourage the millions of potential American entrepreneurs to take the plunge and their potential investors to fund them. That's the not-so-dark secret of how jobs are created.

Letter to the Editor

A series of observations

This is a follow up of the Board of Regents meeting held Dec. 30 at the Board of Regents conference room. I was one of the four community members who were given the opportunity to express our opinions relative to the issues engulfing the college.

As a taxpayer and a community member who has children that may be going to the college in the future, I would like to voice publicly some of my observations of that meeting.

First, I would like to congratulate regent Janet King for accepting the chairmanship of the Board of Regents, despite the challenge of the legal counsel. I would like also to congratulate the members of the board who voted for her. I had the feeling during the election process that the president of the college and regent Cepeda did not want regent King to be the chair. I wonder what their motives were. I watched and listened carefully to regent King's response to the inappropriate question of regent Charles Cepeda when she was voted chair of the board. Her demeanor and her responses led me to believe that she would make an excellent chair for the Board of Regents. Congratulation, chair King!

I worked for many years as a board CEO, so I know what it is to work with a board and how a board interacts with the CEO. My observations during that meeting are as follows:

■ It looks like regent Charles Cepeda was not too happy with the outcome of the election. He seems to be protecting president Fernandez. Why?

■ During this economic crunch and when most government departments are hurting for funding, the college seems to be enjoying an endless flow of cash. To my knowledge, the Public School System is one of the largest departments, yet has only one lawyer. The college has maybe 200-300 employees, yet it has two lawyers. Is it because president Fernandez has the habit of terminating contracts of employees and she needs legal advice to cover her behind? Isn't this a waste of public funds?

■ I have been on Saipan since the establishment of NMC and believe me, I have never witnessed the place to be so divided. The climate of an organization reflects the head or CEO. If the president of the college cannot pull NMC together, why then is the board not addressing this important issue? I have never seen a college with so much turnover of employees. This cannot be good for an institution of higher education.

My hope is that the entire Board of Regents will work to investigate and resolve these issues before the college implodes.

Juan M. Sablan
As Teo, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Mostly cloudy and breezy with scattered showers. Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with scattered showers. Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with scattered showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼76°	▲85° ▼76°	▲85° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°

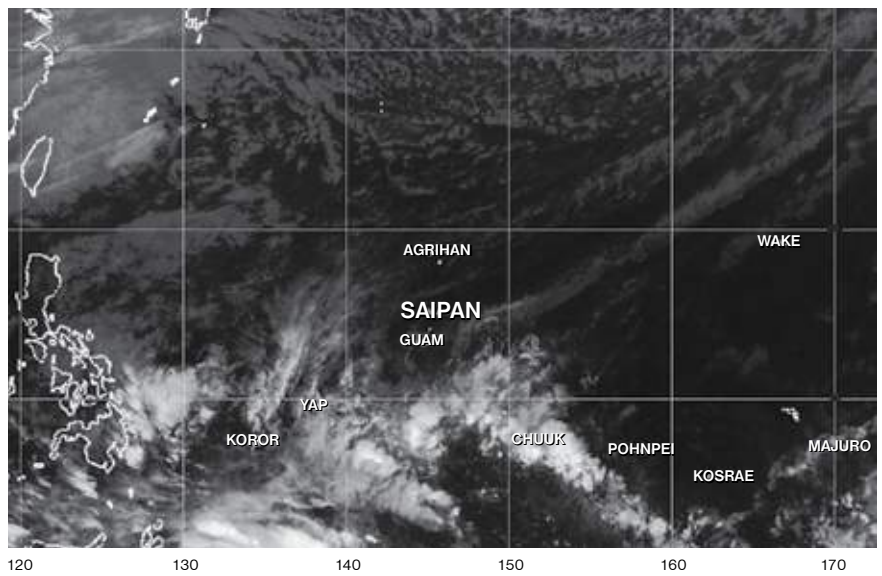
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Cloudy	▲82	▼74
Palau	Showers	▲86	▼78
Yap	Rain	▲85	▼77
Chuuk	Mostly Cloudy	▲89	▼79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲86	▼79
Kosrae	Rain	▲85	▼79
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼76

Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Sunny	▲67	▼59
Beijing	Mostly Cloudy	▲26	▼18
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	▲65	▼60
Honolulu	Partly Sunny	▲80	▼69
London	Flurries	▲34	▼28
Los Angeles	Partly Sunny	▲72	▼50
Manila	Mostly Sunny	▲86	▼73
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	▲93	▼60
Miami	Showers	▲61	▼36
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲26	▼16
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	▲42	▼33
Paris	Snow	▲27	▼26
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲41	▼24
Rome	Showers	▲47	▼35
Salem	Rain	▲51	▼36
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲60	▼47
Seoul	Cloudy	▲27	▼11
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲45	▼28
Washington, DC	Partly Sunny	▲31	▼19

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, FRIDAY, JANUARY 8, 2010
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A weak cold front extends southwestward from north of Wake Island at 25N166E to southeast of Minami Tori Shima at 20N158E then continues as a shear line across Rota at 14N145E to end at 9N130E. Cloudiness and patchy rain are found along and up to 180 miles northwest of the cold front. Scattered showers are seen along and up to 175 miles northwest of the shear line between 140E and 130E. Converging winds southeast of the cold front are producing scattered showers over Wake Island within 70 miles of a line from 17N163E to 24N170E. A near-equatorial trough stretches east-southeastward from south of Mindanao through 5N130E to end at EQ153E. Convergence near the trough axis is combining with upper-level dynamics to generate scattered showers and a few thunderstorms over Koror but south of Yap within 145 miles of a line from 7N133E to 7N138E to 1N147E. A low-level trough reaches northward from 4N151E to 10N148E. Scattered showers are present near the trough axis over Chuuk but south of Pohnpei within 85 miles of a line from 6N147E to 10N148E to 9N152E to 1N162E. Trade-wind convergence is triggering scattered showers over Tarawa and Butaritari atolls between the equator and 5N from 167E to 180.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

3:48 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.4 Feet
8:16 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet
2:12 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
10:01 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.0 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:46 AM	6:02 PM
Sunday	6:46 AM	6:03 PM
Monday	6:46 AM	6:04 PM
Tuesday	6:46 AM	6:04 PM
Wednesday	6:46 AM	6:05 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	1:20 AM	1:01 PM
Sunday	2:15 AM	1:47 PM
Monday	3:10 AM	2:36 PM
Tuesday	4:04 AM	3:27 PM
Wednesday	4:57 AM	4:20 PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 22, 2009

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

C09597	11:30am	12:05pm	1, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

C09597	12:40pm	1:10pm	1, 7

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
C09597	11:30am	1:10pm	1, 7 via ROP
C09601	12:20pm	1:10pm	4, 5
C09603	3:15pm	4:05pm	Daily
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
C09599	9:20pm	10:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO)

NW287	6:00am	7:30pm	Daily via NRT

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

NW287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
NW297	4:45pm	7:30pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ604	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA	6:40am, leave OSA 9:30am
OZ606	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

CZ3008	3:30am	6:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ604/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ604/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ604/703	2:50am	11:25am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ608/705	3:20am	1:30am+1	1, 5 via PUS
C09603/933	3:15pm	9:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:20pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

OZ604/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ604/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	4, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

C09598	3:10am	3:45am	5, 6
C09312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

C09598	2:00am	2:30am	5, 6
C09312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09316	2:00am	2:50am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
C09598	2:00am	3:45am	5, 6 via ROP
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
C09312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6 via ROP
C09602	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	4:50pm	5:40pm	Daily
C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN

NW288	12:05pm	1:20am+1	Daily via NRT

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

NW298	10:05am	2:50pm	Daily
NW288	8:45pm	1:20am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ605	9:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA	8:50pm, leave OSA 9:50pm
OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

CZ3007	7:30pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ716/605	12:30am	2:20pm	4 via ICN
OZ706/607	3:35am	2:10am+1	4, 7 via PUS
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C09596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C0934/9596	11:10pm	7:50am+1	Daily via GUM
OZ704/605	11:55pm	2:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via ICN

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

OZ724/605	12:30am	2:20pm	2,4,6,7 via ICN
OZ750/605	1:00am	2:20pm	2,4,6,7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish
Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish
Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad
Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am
Youth Sunday School: 9am
English Worship Service Sunday: 10am
Sunday Service: 5:30pm
Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm
Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm
Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;
Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm
Mid-week Service: 7:30pm
Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm
Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm
Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,
Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Worship Service: 9am
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am
Sunday: 7am
Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm
Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English)
Saturday: 5:30am (Tagalog); 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville
Sunday Services
9:00 AM
Place of the church-next to Mt. Carmel Cathedral on Chalan Kanoa Dr. • Tel: 322-6158
Pastor JJ Matsumoto

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group
8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
English Service: 9-11am, Sunday
Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 8:20am
Sunday Adult: 10am
Sunday Adult: 11:30am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am–12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided)
Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620

Saipan Bible Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30-10am
Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 6pm
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church
(Formerly Saipan Baptist Church)
Afetna St., San Antonio

Sunday		
	9am	Sunday school
	10am	Regular worship
	6pm	worship
Wednesday		
	7pm	worship

Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.

Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi
Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries

Sunday	5:30am-6:30am	
Morning prayer		
	7am-9am	English service
	7am-9am	Sunday school
	10am-12noon	English service, Koblerville
Wednesday	7pm-9pm	Prayer meeting
Saturday	7pm-9pm	Tagalog service

Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Flashback
A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Jan. 9, 2001

Wiseman may get EAGI nod
The nomination of lawyer David A. Wiseman to the Superior Court now rests with the powerful Senate Committee on Executive Appointments and Governmental Investigations which will determine whether he can be the next judge. EAGI chair Sen. Joaquin G. Adriano indicated yesterday that he does not see any problem in the confirmation process, saying he will personally support Mr. Wiseman to get the Senate's advice and consent as required under the Constitution. The committee is expected to meet this week to schedule the confirmation hearing. "From there, we will know exactly what we will be doing with his nomination," he told in an interview.

RP, CNMI labor pact sealed
Newly-hired Saipan-bound Filipino workers will not be allowed entry in the Commonwealth unless they are able to show a certificate issued by the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration. This came following last month's signing of the amended version of the existing Philippines-CNMI Bilateral Labor Agreement in Manila. Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio headed the Commonwealth delegation who met with Philippine officials led by Labor and Employment Secretary Bienvenido Laguesma and Undersecretary Felicisimo Joson.

Jan. 9, 2002

Inauguration fever hits Capitol Hill
Six days before the inauguration day and preparations are in now full swing, with ground zero-the executive and legislative buildings-being decked out in their Sunday's best. The smell of fresh paint and Pine-Sol hangs in the air as workers go over the insides and outsides of both buildings with new coats of paint. Windows that have accumulated grime are being washed clean and restored to their original sparkling selves. Both upper and lower chambers are a mass of jumbled chairs and tables and cables, with the installation of new light brown carpets and gallery seats. The paintings on the chamber walls have also been taken down for cleaning and are now taking temporary residence along the hallway of the Legislative Bureau.

Stern warning issued against DPW
The Coastal Resources Management Office yesterday unleashed a strong warning against the Department of Public Works for the department's alleged failure to comply with a warning notice in connection with the hazardous waste dumped near the shoreline in Tanapag. The CRMO said that it is already bent on imposing a monetary fine against the public works department. CRMO acting administrator Joaquin D. Salas made the statement in an interview yesterday despite the DPW's disclosure of its plan to relocate the waste—automotive batteries, drums containing waste oil and transformers possibly with polychlorinated biphenyl—at the department's technical services division parking lot in Lower Base.

Jan. 9, 2003

MPLA: We can't lift homestead ban yet
The Marianas Public Lands Authority said the existing moratorium on homestead applications cannot be lifted yet as the implementation of homestead projects has been slow-moving. MPLA board chairperson Ana Demapan-Castro admitted that the MPLA has not made any significant improvement in its homestead projects, partly due to various requirements imposed by other agencies, such as environmental and historical impact assessments and other related concerns. "We're hoping to lift the moratorium, but the fact is, we're not moving. We're trying to assess. There are a lot of agencies involved here. We can't just go ahead with our projects. We're slow-moving because of ordnances, fish and wildlife, PCB contamination, etc.," Demapan-Castro said.

PSS open to reduced hours
If reducing work hours is what it takes to remedy the government's ailing financial health, Education Commissioner Rita H. Inos conceded that the Public School System would have to rise to the occasion and do its part to minimize public expenditure. But then again, Inos said it would be preferable if the PSS-an autonomous public institution-would be given a free hand to deal with cost-reduction measures on its own. "I'm not sure if [the legislative proposal] will give the ability to have agencies deal with their own, instead of being mandated to do certain things, can we be flexible on how we can deal with that? I'm sure we can cut costs but if we can deal with it in our own ways and find a way to that, I would prefer that option," Inos said. "But if I'm told that it's what I need to do and it's the law, and everything is in order with the law, of course, we have to follow that," she added.

Business

Unemployment-claims data signal job gains are near

WASHINGTON (AP)—A government report Thursday on claims for unemployment aid signaled that layoffs are easing and that the economy could be on the verge of posting the first monthly gain in jobs in two years.

The number of people claiming first-time unemployment benefits barely rose last week, the Labor Department said, after falling to its lowest level since July 2008 the previous week. And the four-week average of claims fell for the 18th straight week—to its lowest point since September 2008, when the financial crisis intensified with the collapse of Lehman Brothers.

The four-week average of first-time claims is nearing the roughly 425,000 that many economists say would be a sign the economy will start creating jobs.

The Labor Department will issue a more comprehensive snapshot of the job market on Friday, when it releases the monthly jobs report for December. Overall, economists forecast that the unemployment rate will rise to 10.1 percent from 10 percent and that employers will have shed a net 8,000 jobs.

The steady drop in first-time unemployment claims, and other signs of economic improvement, have led some analysts to predict slight job growth. Even a small net gain in jobs, though, wouldn't be enough to lower the unemployment rate anytime soon. Nor would it go far toward restoring the estimated 8 million jobs lost during the recession.

"We are in for a long, hard slog in the labor market," said Zach Pandl, an economist at Nomura Securities.

Still, a gain in jobs could improve consumer confidence and spur greater spending, fueling the economic recovery.

Many analysts predict the economy grew by up to 4 percent at an annual rate in the October-December quarter. Federal Reserve officials and private economists worry that much of the recovery stems from temporary factors, such as government stimulus efforts and businesses rebuilding inventories.

More hiring could increase household incomes and spending, which would help sustain the recovery. Signs of more hiring, though, could also draw millions of people who have given up their job searches back into the work force. That could boost the unemployment rate in the next few months to as high as 10.5 percent, economists say.

Toyota's Prius top-selling vehicle in Japan last year

TOKYO (AP)—The Toyota Prius was the top-selling car in Japan last year—the first time a gas-electric hybrid has clinched that spot.

The Japan Automobile Dealers Association said Friday that Toyota Motor Corp.'s Prius was No. 1 in its ranking of sales by vehicle models—with 208,876 Prius cars sold in 2009, nearly three times the numbers sold the previous year.

The big success of the Prius in the home market for Toyota, the world's biggest automaker, highlights the growing consumer acceptance of green vehicles.

Hybrid sales already make up about 10 percent of new vehicle sales in Japan.

That's huge compared to other global markets, where hybrids are eye-catching but remain a relatively niche product. Green Car Congress, which researches and compiles reports on green technology, said hybrids have a 2.8 percent share of new vehicle sales in the U.S.

But car owners around the world may be about to embrace not only hybrids but also plug-in hybrids and electric vehicles, which are even greener than the Prius.

The competition in green autos is expected to heighten as new models from other automakers are expected in 2010, including the Chevrolet Volt electric vehicle from General Motors Co.

So far, the Prius reigns supreme in Japan.

It easily outsold the No. 2 hybrid, the Honda Insight, at 93,283 for the year, and ranking fifth in overall Japan sales.

Coming in second for overall car sales was Honda Motor Co.'s Fit, followed by the Toyota Vitz. Both aren't hybrids but are small and fuel efficient models.

Green models have gotten a huge lift this year in Japan from a government cash-for-clunkers program and tax breaks, aimed at boosting sales during a global slowdown that has seriously hurt Japanese automakers.

The Prius was the top-selling model for every month from May last year—the month when an upgraded version hit showrooms. It is so popular buyers must wait weeks to get their Prius. Demand for the Prius has also been strong in the U.S.

"The numbers speak for themselves," said Toyota spokesman Paul Nolasco in Tokyo. "The Prius represents the ideal package people in Japan are looking for in terms of environmental and driving performance."

Nation

Cold grips nation as crash in snowy Ohio kills 4

AP

A fire hydrant pokes out from the snow in Kirksville, Mo. on Thursday Jan. 7, 2010 after an overnight storm.

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)—Steadily falling snow blanketed the Midwest on Thursday, part of a vicious cold snap engulfing much of the nation, and a tractor-trailer spun out of control on snow-slick roads in Ohio, killing four people and injuring seven.

The tractor-trailer jackknifed on Interstate 70, crossed the highway median and swerved into oncoming traffic, colliding with a small bus transporting adult disabled passengers, the Ohio Highway Patrol said.

The victims, all of whom were on the bus, were: Traci Williams, 42; Lonnie Acton, 28; Alonso Ruffin, 37, and Kenny Fry, 61. All were from Springfield. Williams was driving the 17-passenger Chevrolet bus.

The Mack commercial truck was driven by Zygmunt Wieckowski, 59, of Chicago, who was transported to a nearby hospital, the patrol said. His condition was unavailable late Thursday.

Six other passengers of the bus were also injured. The bus was carrying 11 people at the time of the crash, said Sgt. Raymond Durant.

The accident occurred near Springfield in southwest Ohio, where a storm that stretched as far west as the Dakotas had dumped nearly 5 inches of snow by early evening, according to the National Weather Service.

With the cold and icy, snow-covered roads responsible for at least 15 deaths this year, officials throughout the U.S. told people to stay home if they could.

Snowfall was heaviest in Minnesota and parts of South Dakota, where blowing winds piled up drifts too big for snowplow drivers to clear. Some parts of southwestern Minnesota received 8.5 inches of snow by Thursday morning.

In Illinois, six snowplows were involved in accidents, most when other vehicles rear-ended the trucks. By Friday morning, parts of Wisconsin could see up to 12 inches of snow.

Snowflakes fell as far south as Alabama and Georgia on Thursday.

Frostbite-inducing temperatures gripped much of the nation, and schools in at least 10 states were closed, as were roads and government offices.

NJ airport video shows security guard leaving post

NEWARK, N.J. (AP)—Call it the airport embrace felt around the world.

A man took advantage of a guard's absence to sneak past a Newark Liberty International Airport security checkpoint Sunday evening and walk arm-in-arm with a woman into a secure area, causing a terminal shutdown that delayed flights across the globe and called into question just how secure the nation's airports really are.

The couple's actions emerged in a surveillance video released Thursday by the office of Sen. Frank Lautenberg, D-N.J., who had pushed the Transportation Security Administration to release the footage.

In the video, the man stations himself near an exit lane, where departing passengers pass a security guard to leave the terminal. The security officer appears to walk over and tell the man to step outside a rope barrier.

A minute or so later, after the guard leaves his podium for several seconds, the woman approaches the exit from inside the terminal and motions to the man, who ducks under the rope to join her. The two then walk into the passenger-only area with their arms wrapped around each other.

During the time the guard was away from his post, dozens of passengers are seen walking out through the exit lane, further obscuring the man and woman. Someone waiting for an arriving passenger notified the guard.

The officer has been placed on administrative leave while the TSA investigates the breach.

"The surveillance video from Newark Liberty Airport clearly shows that a TSA officer's actions led to the Sunday incident," the TSA said in a statement Thursday. "We will use this hard lesson to reinforce the sharp focus and tight discipline at all our stations across the country and ensure we maintain the public trust."

One of Newark's terminals was closed for six hours Sunday night, stranding thousands of passengers and wreaking havoc on flight schedules around the world for more than a day.

During a news conference at the airport Wednesday, Lautenberg and fellow Sen. Robert Menendez and Rep. Donald Payne, also of New Jersey, criticized the TSA for the actions of the guard and for the revelation that the security camera at the checkpoint was streaming live video but wasn't recording at the time of the incident.

Stricter new smog limit would hit rural areas, too

WASHINGTON (AP)—Hundreds of communities far from congested highways and belching smokestacks could soon join big cities and industrial corridors in violation of stricter limits on lung-damaging smog proposed Thursday by the Obama administration.

Costs of compliance could be in the tens of billions of dollars, but the government said the rules would save other billions—as well as lives—in the long run.

More than 300 counties—mainly in southern California, the Northeast and Gulf Coast—already violate the current, looser requirements adopted two years ago by the Bush administration and will find it even harder to reduce smog-forming pollution enough to comply with the law.

The new limits being considered by the Environmental Protection Agency could more than double the number of counties in violation and reach places like California's wine country in Napa Valley and rural Trego County, Kan., and its 3,000 residents.

For the first time, counties in Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, the Dakotas, Kansas, Minnesota and Iowa might be forced to find ways to clamp down on smog-forming emissions from industry and automobiles, or face government sanctions, most likely the loss of federal highway dollars.

The tighter standards, though costly to implement, will ultimately save billions in avoided emergency room visits, premature deaths, and missed work and school days, the EPA said.

"EPA is stepping up to protect Americans from one of the most persistent and widespread pollutants we face," said agency administrator Lisa Jackson. "Using the best science to strengthen these standards is long overdue action that will help millions of Americans breathe easier and live healthier."

The proposal presents a range for the allowable concentration of ground-level ozone, the main ingredient in smog, from 60 parts per billion to 70 parts, as recommended by scientists during the Bush administration. That's equivalent to a single tennis ball in an Olympic-sized swimming pool full of tennis balls.

Obama says anti-terror 'buck' stops with him

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama declared Thursday "the buck stops with me" for the nation's security, taking responsibility for failures that led to the near-disastrous Christmas attack on a Detroit-bound airliner and vowing the problems would be corrected. He said the lapses were widespread but suggested no officials would be fired.

Obama didn't tell intelligence officials to dramatically change what they're doing. Instead, he told them to do it better, and faster. He left it to them to figure out how.

Clearly aware of the potential political fallout, Obama struck a tough tone toward the anti-terror fight, taking the rare step—for him—of calling it a "war."

Obama

In one concrete change, the administration is adding more air marshals to flights. Hundreds of law enforcement officers from Homeland Security Department agencies are being trained and deployed to the federal Air Marshal Service, said a government official familiar with the strategy.

There are more than 4,000 federal air marshals but many times that number for domestic and international flights each day.

In the president's bleak assessment and a White House-released report about what went wrong, the country got an alarming picture of a post-Sept. 11 debacle: an intelligence community that failed to understand what it had. U.S. intelligence officials had enough information to identify the suspect as an al-Qaida terrorist operative and keep him off a plane but still could not identify and disrupt the plot, and security measures didn't catch him, either.

ACROSS THE NATION

Suspect in St. Louis plant shooting believed dead

ST. LOUIS (AP)—A disgruntled worker embroiled in a pension dispute with his company showed up at the plant and opened fire Thursday, killing three people and wounding five before apparently killing himself. The shooting spree at ABB Group's plant sent frightened co-workers scrambling into closets and to the snow-covered roof for safety. Police declined to name the gunman, but media widely identified him as 51-year-old Timothy Hendron of Webster Groves, a St. Louis suburb. A fire official confirmed earlier Thursday that that was the name of the person police said they were seeking.

Calif. judge orders teen, lover tried for murder

PLACERVILLE, Calif. (AP)—A California judge has decided a 15-year-old girl and her 20-year-old boyfriend should be tried in the slaying of the girl's mother. El Dorado County Douglas Phimister ruled Thursday that there is enough evidence to try Tylar Witt and Steven Colver in the murder of 47-year-old Joanne Witt. The two are charged with killing Witt in June at her home in El Dorado Hills, about 40 miles east of Sacramento. Phimister earlier ruled that the teen can be prosecuted as an adult. Prosecutors presented evidence that the two planned to marry and tried to hide their relationship from the girl's mother.

Missing Utah woman's husband appears to be moving

WEST VALLEY CITY, Utah (AP)—Police say it appears the husband of a missing Utah woman is moving out of the couple's Salt Lake City home. West Valley City police Capt. Tom McLachlan says it appears relatives of Josh Powell are packing up items from the home and relocating the family to Washington state. Susan Powell has been missing since Dec. 7. She was last seen by her husband, who has said he left on a winter camping trip with the couple's children at about 12:30 a.m. that day. Police say Josh Powell is the only person of interest in the case. He has not been named a suspect. The Powells have family in Washington state.

Asia

Explosion at Karachi house kills at least 6 men

KARACHI, Pakistan (AP)—A blast apparently caused by explosives stored in a house in the southern Pakistani city of Karachi killed at least six people Friday morning, police said.

The presence of militants in the home in the Baldia area of the city, a mostly Pashtun neighborhood that is a suspected hide-out of Taliban militants, could not be ruled out, police chief Wasim Ahmad told The Associated Press.

Police were investigating to determine exactly how the explosion occurred, and who the six men killed in the blast were, he said.

Television footage showed police seizing guns, suicide vests and grenades from the site.

Local resident Noor Mohammed said he rushed to the scene just after the explosion and saw some of the dead men were wearing camouflage jackets. He said the men moved into the house about three months ago.

AP

A Pakistan man prays at the Beri Iman, a shrine of famous Sufi Saint Beri Imam, in Islamabad, Pakistan, Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2010.

Karachi, Pakistan's largest city and commercial hub, has largely been spared the Taliban-linked violence that has struck much of the rest of the country, a fact that analysts believe is driven by the group's tendency to use it as a place to rest and raise money. But the city has been the scene of frequent ethnic, political and sectarian violence.

On Dec. 28, a bombing against a minority Shiite Muslim religious procession in the city killed 43 people and wounded dozens. Riots broke out after that attack, with people setting fire to the country's largest wholesale market. The blaze burned for more than two days and destroyed thousands of shops in the area.

3 Malaysian churches attacked in 'Allah' dispute

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—Three Malaysian Christian churches were attacked with firebombs Friday, causing extensive damage to one and sharply escalating religious tensions in the country over the use of the word "Allah" by non-Muslim minorities.

Prime Minister Najib Razak condemned the attacks by unidentified assailants, who struck before dawn in different suburbs of Kuala Lumpur. He said the government "will take whatever steps it can to prevent such acts."

Home Minister Hishammuddin Hussein said the country's leaders were very concerned about the situation. "We don't want this to spread out into something else ... I am not only assuring the minorities, I am assuring all Malaysians—anybody who is in Malaysia—that they are safe," he told reporters.

Malaysia is often held up as a model for other Islamic countries because of its economic development, a progressive society and the generally peaceful coexistence of its different races. The Malay Muslim majority comprise 60 percent of the country's 28 million people while the rest are mostly ethnic Chinese and Indians. They follow Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism and other faiths.

The Allah controversy, however, has the potential to shatter that carefully nurtured harmony, drive a deep racial wedge and scare away sorely needed foreign investment as the country struggles to emerge from the global financial crisis.

In the first attack, the ground-level office of the three-story Metro Tabernacle Church was destroyed in a blaze set off by a firebomb thrown by attackers on motorcycles soon after midnight, police said. The worship areas on the upper two floors were undamaged and there were no injuries.

Two other churches were attacked hours later, with one sustaining minor damage while the other was not damaged.

Many Muslims have expressed outrage since a Dec. 31 Kuala Lumpur High Court verdict struck down a ban on non-Muslims using "Allah" in their literature. The government has appealed the verdict.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Anti-whaling boat sinks in Antarctica

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)—The high-tech anti-whaling boat damaged in a collision with a Japanese whaler sank off Antarctica on Friday, but posed no threat to the pristine environment, a conservation group said. The bow of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society's *Ady Gil* was sheared off Wednesday in a collision with a far larger Japanese whaling ship, in the most serious clash in what has become an annual confrontation off the frozen continent. The whaler, *Shonan Maru No. 2*, suffered no apparent damage. Both sides blame the other for the collision, which occurred as the *Ady Gil* harassed the Japanese fleet.

Toddler recovering after chopstick pierces brain

BEIJING (AP)—A 14-month-old boy in China is recovering after doctors removed a chopstick from his brain that accidentally poked up through his nose, a spokesman for the local hospital said Thursday. The toddler, Li Jingchao, from the eastern province of Shandong, is undergoing treatment at Bo Ai Hospital in Beijing for an infection caused by the life-threatening impalement, spokesman Chen Yawei said. Li was playing with chopsticks while his mother was in the kitchen washing dishes when he fell and began crying when a chopstick pierced into his nose, Chen said. Because local hospitals did not have the technology to safely remove the chopstick, Li's parents traveled 10 hours north by car to Beijing on Dec. 26 immediately after the accident, Chen said.

Suicide bomber kills 7 in east Afghanistan market

KABUL (AP)—A suicide bomber killed seven people at a busy bazaar in eastern Afghanistan on Thursday, and a bomb hidden in a garbage container outside a provincial governor's compound slightly wounded the official, authorities said. The attacks were in Paktia and Khost provinces, both of which border Pakistan and suffer frequent violence as insurgents gain momentum in their fight against Afghan and international troops. In Gardez, the capital of Paktia province to the south, a suicide bomber on foot blew himself up in a bazaar near a six-vehicle convoy of security workers, said Deputy Gov. Abdul Rahman Mangal. He said seven people were killed, including the commander of Afghan security guards at a base for a provincial reconstruction team in Logar province. Another 24 were wounded, he said.

World

Yemen: Nigerian may have met radical cleric

SAN'A, Yemen (AP)—Yemen on Thursday provided the most comprehensive account yet of contacts between al-Qaida and the Nigerian accused of trying to blow up a U.S. airliner, saying he may have met with a radical U.S.-born cleric who previously had contact with the alleged Fort Hood shooter.

In the weeks before the attempted airliner attack, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab met with al-Qaida operatives in a remote mountainous region that was later hit in an airstrike that targeted a gathering of the group's top leaders, Yemen's deputy prime minister said.

The account by Rashad al-Alimi, who oversees security issues in the government, filled in some of the blanks in Abdulmutallab's movements before his failed attempt to detonate explosives on a Christmas Day flight to Detroit.

But al-Alimi also raised new questions. He contended that Abdulmutallab was recruited by al-Qaida in Britain and that the 23-year-old received the explosives in Nigeria. U.S. officials say Abdulmutallab told FBI investigators that al-Qaida operatives in Yemen gave him the material and trained him in how to use it.

In a speech Thursday, President Barack Obama outlined three broad areas where U.S. agencies fell short in addressing the threat, failing to "connect the dots" that would have revealed Abdulmutallab was planning an attack. He also announced steps to prevent such failure again.

Abdulmutallab came to Yemen in August, ostensibly to study Arabic at a San'a language institute where he previously studied from 2004-2005. But he disappeared in September, and his whereabouts were unknown until he left the country Dec. 4.

Al-Alimi said that at some point during that period, the Nigerian met with al-Qaida in a sparsely populated area of Shabwa province amid high mountains some 200 miles southeast of the capital.

Wife says CIA bomber hated the United States

ISTANBUL (AP)—A Jordanian doctor-turned-suicide bomber who killed seven CIA employees at a base in Afghanistan is regarded by his family as a martyr in Islam's holy war against the United States, his wife said Thursday.

Covered in a black Islamic chador, Defne Bayrak, the Turkish wife of bomber Humam Khalil Abu-Mulal al-Balawi, lauded her husband's Dec. 30 attack to Turkish journalists in Istanbul.

"I am proud of him; my husband has carried out a great operation in such a war. May God accept his martyrdom," Bayrak told the Dogan news agency.

She later told the state-run Anatolia news agency: "My husband did this against the U.S. invasion."

Turkish police questioned Bayrak after her remarks Thursday, her family said. Police confirmed she was questioned and released.

Radical Islamists from around the world praised al-Balawi on Jihad forums and religious Web sites.

"He plunged into the midst of the enemy and carried out a martyrdom operation, detonating his creative and perfect explosive belt," said one eulogy on a site called Online Jihad.

The sites included very few remarks by Turkish Islamists. Several homegrown radical Muslim groups exist in Turkey, but al-Qaida's austere and violent interpretation of Islam receives little public support.

Still, in 2003 al-Qaida-linked militants killed 58 people in suicide attacks on two synagogues, the British consulate and a British bank in Istanbul.

WORLD BRIEFS

Official: Jamaica to take in radical Muslim cleric

KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP)—A Jamaica-born Muslim cleric who has called for killing Americans, Hindus and Jews has not committed any crimes in his native country and the Caribbean island will take him in, the foreign affairs minister said Thursday.

It is unclear when Sheik Abdullah el-Faisal might arrive in Jamaica, where he lived before departing for Africa in early 2009 on a Jamaican passport, Minister Kenneth Baugh told Nationwide News Network radio. He did not know what route el-Faisal would take to Jamaica. "As far as monitoring him, that will be left to the Ministry of National Security who have their program in place to maintain surveillance," said Baugh, without revealing specifics. Kenya deported El-Faisal to Gambia on Thursday after several countries, including the United States, denied him a transit visa. Kenya's immigration minister said Gambian authorities have agreed to help el-Faisal find his way home.

EU nations divided on use of airport body scanners

BRUSSELS (AP)—Fearing a rift with the United States, the European Union said Thursday it may force resistant member states to use the full-body scanners being pushed by the Obama administration in the wake of the failed Christmas Day bombing. Britain, the Netherlands and Italy already have joined Washington in announcing plans to install more of the devices—which can "see" through clothing—in the aftermath of the attempt to blow up a Northwest Airlines flight from Amsterdam to Detroit. But there are deep divisions among European nations, with countries such as Spain and Germany calling the scanners intrusive and a potential health risk. A trans-Atlantic divide over scanners could throw air travel on lucrative routes—already reeling from the economic downturn—into further disarray.

American mother, baby killed by elephant in Kenya

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)—Sharon Brown was hiking with family and her 1-year-old daughter in a Kenyan nature reserve when suddenly their unarmed guide froze in his tracks. Around a corner was an elephant. The guide shouted to turn back, but it was too late. The elephant—which was protecting a calf nearby—gored the young American mother, tossed her in the air and dragged her body into the forest, a relative said. The baby, who was flung out of her carrier, also died. "We watched helplessly," Brown's brother-in-law, Rick LeVert, said of the tragic end to what was supposed to have been a scenic nature walk in the forest surrounding the lodge where the family was staying near Mount Kenya National Park.

UK police probe death of young lottery winner

LONDON (AP)—Police were investigating Thursday the death of a man who became a millionaire after winning Britain's National Lottery when he was 17. Police in Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland, said they were looking into the death of 29-year-old Stuart Donnelly, who was found dead in his home in the small southwestern Scottish town of Castle Douglas early Wednesday. Donnelly won just under 2 million pounds in November 1997—nearly $1.2 million at the time—and gained media attention for being one of Britain's youngest lottery winners. People must be 16 or over to play the lottery in Britain.

Maharlika
PINOY LIFE IN THE MARIANAS
Saturday, January 9, 2010

Families separated by miles, years and IMMIGRATION LAWS

By ANTONIO OLIVO
(C) 2009, CHICAGO TRIBUNE

CHICAGO—When Peter Aldeza first arrived in Illinois from the Philippines, he filed U.S. immigration paperwork to allow his older brother and sister to join him. That was 26 years ago.

Just last month, his sister, Sionie Sales, finally arrived to live in the U.S., in what has been a bittersweet reunion of once-close siblings now trying to become reacquainted. She was an exuberant 26-year-old when he left home. She is a grandmother now.

"It has been very interesting and very fulfilling," said Aldeza, 48, his voice cracking with emotion. "She's a lot older, but very much the same."

Their story embodies the experience of thousands of families waiting on a legal immigration process bogged down by delays, a frustration that lies at the heart of renewed efforts to reform the U.S. immigration system.

A bill introduced in Congress by Democratic lawmakers this month seeks a "promotion of family unity" by placing a high priority on eliminating backlogs for legal immigration—which activists say contribute to the country's problems with illegal immigration. They say some prospective immigrants, frustrated by the delays, find a way into the country illegally.

SCOTT STRAZZANTE/CHICAGO TRIBUNE/MCT

After 26 years of trying, Peter Aldeza, left, finally was able to bring his sister Sionie Sales from the Philippines to the United States. The two sit at table in Aldeza's home in Frankfort, Illinois, December 21, 2009. Sales, who was a nurse in the Philippines, is studying to be able to work in the United States.

Among the changes proposed under the bill is a provision to exempt immediate relatives from the annual cap on immigrant visas for a given country.

That would have the effect of speeding up the process for everyone else in line. Conservative groups seeking to limit all forms of immigration have long opposed family pipelines, arguing that letting more people into the U.S. would place extra burdens on schools and other infrastructure.

For Sales, 52, the process began when she was a young nursing student eager to leave her poverty-stricken island in the Southeast Pacific Ocean to be with her younger brother in the U.S.

The two share fond childhood memories of swimming in the hot springs near their home in the outskirts of Manila, venturing into the capital as young adults and, above all, teaming up in playful fights against their older brother, David, now 54.

His application to come to the U.S. is still pending.

With adulthood came the desire for greater opportunity—something in short supply for many who are perpetually struggling in the Philippines, the siblings said.

Because Aldeza was born in the U.S.—when their parents briefly worked in Chicago as medical students—he was qualified to immediately sponsor his siblings' applications.

Sales recalled being thrilled by the idea of coming to the U.S.

"I really wanted to work here," she said.

However, as the years went by with no word about her application, the excitement faded into a vague hope, she said.

Over time, what was once a strong family bond became frayed by the distance, with Aldeza traveling back to the Philippines for just two short visits during the last two decades as he raised his family here. Sales married and had two children of her own.

"We kept in touch through letters, pictures and by the telephone," mostly when family news was to be delivered, such as when children and grandchildren were born and when their parents died several years ago, Aldeza said.

Finally, in June 2008, a letter to Sales from the U.S. government arrived out of the blue, confirming that her immigration application had been processed and approved.

"I was overjoyed and excited, but, at the same time worried because I may not be able to work now," said Sales, who took more than a year to decide that after all that time, she still wanted to come. "I'm already 52 years old. I haven't worked for a long time."

As she adjusts to her new surroundings—particularly the frigid Midwestern winters—Sales said she is preparing to begin anew by studying for entrance exams for nursing school here.

With much of the Philippines still wracked by poverty—exacerbated by two typhoons in October that killed about 1,000 people and caused $4.4 billion in damages—Sales also is trying to bring her children and three grandchildren to the U.S.

"I've sent their papers to the visa center, but (U.S. immigration officials) have not yet answered," she said, adding that she hopes the process won't again be filled with delay. "I want them to be with me here."

Saudi pardons initial 9 OFWs

MANILA, Philippines—An initial batch of nine Filipinos have been pardoned and released from jail under the royal decree issued on the occasion of the return of the Saudi Crown Prince, the Philippine Embassy in Riyadh reported Thursday to the Department of Foreign Affairs.

To mark the return of Crown Prince Sultan bin Abdulaziz from medical treatment overseas, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah issued royal pardons last December 11, 2009.

Their names are being withheld until their next of kin have been informed, the DFA said in a statement.

These nine Filipinos are undergoing the necessary government procedures before they are allowed to leave the country, it said.

The embassy is working on arranging the tickets for their journey back home, including with their original employers, if any.

Earlier, Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo expressed "deep appreciation for the benevolence and kindness of His Majesty King Abdullah and wished him and Crown Prince Sultan long life."

Romulo also said that the Philippine government regularly requests for the inclusion of Filipinos in any pardon, especially before Ramadan, and when it knows that they have served at least half their sentences and have made restitutions under the private rights aspect of their cases. ***(INQUIRER.net)***

Philippine consul inducts MDX officers

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Officers and members of MDX pose with Philippine Consul General Medardo Macaraig, seated center, during the induction of officers at the Pistang Pinoy restaurant in Susupe on Dec. 27.

There is nothing wrong with being an overseas Filipino worker.

Thus says Philippine Consul General Medardo G. Macaraig, as he encouraged workers on Saipan to explore opportunities to start up small businesses during the induction of officers of the MDX group at the Pistang Pinoy restaurant in Susupe Dec. 27.

The Filipino consul said workers should look forward to exploring alternative livelihoods long before 2014 and the Philippine Consulate will be available to assist by providing trainings in the coming months.

Speaking before members of MDX, a non-profit organization of ham radio operators, the Filipino consul general acknowledged the support of MDX, especially in the coming elections where 7,200 Filipino voters in the CNMI are expected to cast their votes.

Leading the batch of newly elected officers of MDX this year, Sandy Pablo, president, said he would like to fulfill his duties in the best way he could with the help of his fellow members of MDX. He said he's relying on the members to support MDX projects and the newly elected officers.

Board chair Wilfredo Ching congratulated the new officers and vowed to assist them as they continue to do public service on Saipan. He also encouraged the members to keep actively involved in MDX activities.

Other officers elected were Lando Paspe, vice president; Flor Mirando, secretary; Jay Diyco, treasurer; Beverly Casaclang, auditor; Arnel Diesta and Marcelino Vallerio, PRO.

The MDX board is headed by Wilfredo Ching with Cesar Villaluz, Romeo Malasarte, Edgardo Reyes, Leo Canedo, Ronnie Ano, Romeo Sison, Melecio Guevarra, and Marcelino Vallerio.

MDX is a non-profit organization of HAM radio operators actively involved in giving assistance to the community in time of need. ***(PR)***

Lacson faces murder raps in Dacer-Corbito slaying

By DONA PAZZIBUGAN, PHILIP TUBEZA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—After nearly a decade, the alleged brains behind the Dacer-Corbito killings is facing trial and may have to defend himself behind bars.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson has been charged in court with two counts of murder in connection with the killing of top public relations man Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito on Nov. 24, 2000.

A panel of prosecutors from the Department of Justice found credible the affidavit and court testimony of former Senior Supt. Cezar Mancao II, who said it was Lacson, his former boss, who had masterminded the twin murders.

The DOJ panel filed the charges against Lacson at the Manila Regional Trial Court Thursday morning.

No bail was recommended

In a statement issued by Lacson's office, the senator's lawyers said the DOJ decision was not surprising because it had "prejudged" their client.

"From the very start, Senator Lacson made it clear that the DOJ, through then Secretary Raul Gonzalez and through acting Secretary Agnes Devanadera, had prejudged the case against him and that the DOJ was going to indict him at any cost to silence him and to punish him for his exposés against the administration," said Alexander Poblador, one of Lacson's lawyers.

It was Mancao's affidavit that had prompted Dacer's children to ask the DOJ to reopen the investigation and include Lacson among the accused.

In the affidavit he executed on Feb. 13, 2009, at Fort Lauderdale, Florida, in the United States before he was extradited, Mancao said that about a month before the murders, he heard Lacson tell former Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino, Lacson's then most loyal aide, to have Dacer killed.

At the time, Lacson was the chief of the Philippine National Police and concurrent head of the now defunct elite team Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force.

Aquino was then the operations chief of the PAOCTF, and Mancao, the head of its Task Force Luzon.

'Nothing political'

The three-member DOJ panel recommended that the case against Lacson be consolidated with the ongoing case being heard by the Manila RTC Branch 18 against 21 accused, including Aquino and former PAOCTF officials and operatives.

"We based our findings on the documents submitted by the family of Dacer, which are mainly those already existing in the case before the RTC

Sen. Panfilo Lacson

Branch 18, plus the Feb. 13, 2009, affidavit executed by Mancao in Florida," Senior State Prosecutor Peter Ong, the head of the panel, told reporters in a news conference.

Mancao's claim was corroborated by another former Lacson aide, ex-Senior Supt. Glenn Dumlao, who was also extradited last year from the United States where he, Mancao and Aquino fled before they could be arrested back in 2001.

Dumlao has been discharged as an accused and is now a state witness, and the government has also asked the court to discharge Mancao as an accused. But they are now both covered by the DOJ Witness Protection Program.

The panel dismissed Lacson's claim that he was under "political persecution" by virtue of his being a member of the opposition.

"There is nothing political in this case," Ong said. "This is about bringing justice to the victims of a heinous crime and stopping others from committing the same."

Ong said Lacson's "defense hinges primarily on persecution, to which we didn't give consideration. He insisted that the testimony of Mancao is not believable, but we didn't give weight to it."

Devanadera had called the news conference to announce that charges had been filed against Lacson. Also present were Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño, Assistant Chief State Prosecutor Richard Fadullon, and the other panel members, State Prosecutors Marmarie Satin-Vivas and Mari Elvira Herrera.

"Senator Lacson is not precluded from availing [himself] of all remedies available to him under the law," Devanadera said.

No complaint vs Estrada

Although Mancao also implicated former President Joseph Estrada in his affidavit, the DOJ did not include the latter in the preliminary investigation because the Dacer family had yet to file a formal complaint against him.

But Ong quoted the Dacer siblings' lawyer as saying that they would file a complaint against Estrada.

Asked to comment, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada said he was glad his father was not charged.

"Let justice take its own course. Of course, we are relieved that President Erap was not included. It only shows that they have no evidence against him," the senator said at a press conference.

He added: "They do not have direct or testimonial evidence against the former President. ... It's all hearsay. This only shows the wheels of justice [are turning] in this country."

Senator Estrada also said Lacson would now get his day in court.

"He's old enough or man enough to defend himself in court. At least, he was given a chance to prove his innocence in court," Senator Estrada said.

'A third of RP towns could see poll clashes

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Security forces have identified nearly a third of all Philippine cities and towns as in danger of erupting in violence during elections in May, officials said Thursday.

The Philippines has a history of heated, bloody elections that also are often marred by fraud. An area is classified as an election hotspot if there is presence of rebels or armed groups, a history of political violence or proliferation of loose guns.

National Police Chief Jesus Verzosa said 558 of the country's of 1,634 cities and municipalities have been identified as areas of concern and will get added attention from security forces ahead of the national and local polls, which include a vote for president.

"We in fact will be watching for massive buying or transfer of illegal firearms in those areas before the elections," Verzosa said. "We will infuse additional men and logistics in those areas to conduct more checkpoints, search for illegal weapons and target wanted persons."

Verzosa said 118 of the hotspots are within a predominantly Muslim autonomous region in the south where Muslim rebels, militants and various armed groups operate.

Elections Commission Chairman Jose Melo asked the police and military to put extra effort into gathering evidence against political warlords who maintain their own private armies so that they can be charged and disqualified from the vote.

The private armies were thrust into the spotlight in November when 57 people in an election convoy, including 30 journalists, were massacred, allegedly by members of a rival clan. The carnage sparked international outrage, prompting President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to briefly impose martial law to crack down on the clan and its army. She also ordered all private armies disbanded.

Armed Forces chief General Victor S. Ibrado said in some cases the private armies were stronger than the police force in the area, so the military will be supporting the police in the campaign to dismantle them.

Journalist's widow faces Ampatuan Jr. in NBI jail

MANILA, Philippines—Myrna Reblando, the widow of slain photojournalist Alejandro "Bong" Reblando, went to the National Bureau of Investigation to check reports that Andal Ampatuan Jr., the main suspect in the Nov. 23 Maguindanao massacre, was being given special treatment.

She also wanted to ask Ampatuan Jr. the many questions that have been agitating her since her husband's brutal killing.

But once face to face with the Datu Unsay mayor, Myrna was overcome with emotion. She couldn't speak and could only weep in anger.

"I had flashbacks of what happened to my husband when I saw him (Ampatuan Jr.)," Myrna said.

Reblando, a photojournalist of the Manila Bulletin, was one of the 57 people who were murdered when a group of armed men, allegedly led by Ampatuan Jr., stopped a convoy of his political rival last Nov. 23. About 30 journalists accompanying the convoy died in the horrific massacre that followed.

Reblando's body, when it was found, was barely recognizable because, like most of the victims, his face had been riddled with bullets and bashed in.

"When I was asked to identify him, I was not asked what he looked like. I was asked what he wore. That told me that his face was beyond recognition," Myrna recalled.

A few hours before she and lawyer Harry Roque were allowed into the NBI jail to confirm reports that Ampatuan Jr. was receiving special treatment by being detained with female inmates, Myrna said she had many questions she wanted to ask the mayor.

Those questions were left unasked when she was escorted by Ric Diaz, the NBI spokesperson on the Maguindanao massacre case, and Roque inside the detention facility where she saw Ampatuan alone in a cell between the jails for male and female inmates. ***(Philippine Daily Inquirer)***

PHILIPPINE BRIEFS

10 soldiers hurt in Maguindanao road accident

CAMP SIONGCO, Maguindanao—At least 10 soldiers were hurt when their truck figured in an accident, caught fire, and then exploded Thursday in Guindulungan town, Maguindanao, an Army officer said Friday. Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Ponce, civil-military operations chief of the 6th Infantry Division, said soldiers from the 46th Infantry Battalion were aboard an Isuzu Elf cargo truck en route here from Shariff Aguak town when the mishap happened past 2 p.m. in Barangay (village) Bagan. Ponce said the driver of the Isuzu swerved to avoid an approaching 10-wheeler truck, causing him to lose control of his vehicle. The truck skidded into an open space off the highway, caught fire then exploded. ***(Inquirer Mindanao)***

20 hurt in Isabel road accident

SAN MATEO, Isabela, Philippines—At least 20 people who were on their way to a prayer rally were hurt when an overloaded passenger jeep and a delivery van collided along the national highway on Thursday night in Barangay (village) Daramuangan Sur in San Mateo town, police said. Christian Puguon of San Mariano town, who was driving the jeep, admitted driving at 100 kilometers per hour and was overtaking another car when they slammed head-on with the oncoming delivery van driven by Reynante Andres at 7 p.m., police said. Puguon, who was temporarily detained at the police station here, said he and the 56 occupants, all members of the religious sect Free Believers of Christ, were on their way to a prayer rally in General Aguinaldo in Ramon town when the accident had happened. ***(Inquirer Northern Luzon)***

68 private armies on watch list

MANILA, Philippines—The military and police are keeping a close eye on 170 private armies across the country, most of them in the restive Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, officials said Thursday. Based on a watch list of the Philippine National Police and the Armed Forces of the Philippines of "partisan armed groups," 68 have already been validated, 25 of them in the ARMM. Security forces are validating another 102 groups on the list, of which 77 are in the ARMM, said PNP Director General Jesus Verzosa. He said the PNP separated the list of armed groups monitored in ARMM from those found in other parts of the country "because almost all areas in the region are included in the election watch list." ***(Philippine Daily Inquirer)***

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She chops, she wraps, she scores

By BONNIE S. BENWICK
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WASHINGTON—Feli Orinion is an executive housekeeper for Willkie Farr & Gallagher in downtown. She has the first pot of coffee on before anyone else gets in, no matter how early. In her 13 years there, the law firm has come to appreciate her attention to detail, her unsinkable attitude and, at party time, her platters of homemade lumpia.

Orinion is from the Philippines, born and raised in the northern city of Dagupan. She didn't really learn to cook until after she and her husband, Pete, moved to Washington in 1977. But Orinion had watched her relatives prepare and devour hundreds of those same fried spring rolls for every family gathering.

Lumpia are the high school musicals of finger food: no easy feat, but a definite crowd pleaser. Skilled hands and much practice bring together great heaps of raw ingredients. The rolls can be put together like fresh spring rolls, but most are filled with a mixture of cooked vegetables and some kind of ground meat, poultry or shrimp, then fried briefly till golden brown. Served with a garlic-vinegar dipping sauce, they tend to disappear in a fraction of the time they took to make—a bittersweet rush for any cook who produces labor-intensive fare.

"I put them out and, poof! Where did they go?," Orinion says. "I think, `I should have brought more.' My people eat them as a snack, as a main dish, any time of day."

She reckons that she makes 200 to 300 at a time, either with Pete at her side or with some of her friends in Washington's Filipino community. The Orinions have a reputation for showing up at celebrations and school events with several platters, and friends of theirs have one delicious thing in common: A 20-pack of "Feli's lumpia" is in their freezers, ready to be finished in hot oil.

"I've had other kinds of egg rolls and Filipino lumpia. I've never had anything exactly like the ones Feli makes," says Lucy Carlson, a former Willkie Farr & Gallagher lawyer now at the Justice Department. "The filling is different, and hers don't go soggy after an hour." Carlson's freezer stash recently was nabbed by her parents, who were visiting for Thanksgiving and took the lumpia home to North Carolina in a cooler.

Judging from the recipes for lumpia that show up in just about every online link for Philippine cuisine, there's plenty of room for interpretation. Garlic, green beans, carrots, cabbage and onion are common filling ingredients; mushrooms and mung bean sprouts are fairly popular.

Orinion, 58, doesn't claim to make the best lumpia in town. Her rolls are, however, obviously the work of hands with muscle memory: tightly constructed, of similar length and thickness. Arthritis in her fingers and a knee in need of replacement have prompted certain concessions. She does not make the wrappers herself. She buys a super-thin kind of spring roll shell instead because real lumpia wrappers, whether homemade or store-bought, can tear so easily: "I don't have time for that once we get going," she says.

THE WASHINGTON POST

Feli Orinion's pancit, a dish common at birthday parties in the Philippines, is a labor-intensive mix of chopped vegetables and meat. Orinion is photographed at home in Washington.

Her food processor does most of the chopping. Assembly takes place at the dining room table of their Washington rowhouse, so she can sit down "with pillows at my back," Orinion says. "That way, I can do about 100 in an hour." Using clean foam trays that once held raw chicken, she creates flat packages of the just-rolled lumpia, wrapping each layer in plastic wrap. It keeps them from drying out and readies them for freezer storage.

Orinion is known for her rendition of pancit, a noodle dish that also starts with lots of chopping. She says the dish signifies long life, so it is served at every Filipino birthday celebration. The Orinions' children, Evert, 22, and Lyndon, 21, ask for it whenever they come home from college.

Unfortunately, vegetables for pancit must be cut by hand. "I can't do them in the food processor," she says. "They don't turn out right." So Pete becomes her sous-chef, picking up a Chinese cleaver to dispatch the carrots, celery, cabbage, onion, green beans, garlic and boneless, skinless chicken breasts into small pieces.

After the vegetables have been prepped and the noodles soaked, the pancit comes together fairly quickly in a wok. Orinion uses two big wooden spoons to keep the mixture moving; it initially appears to be much greater than what the cooking vessel can contain. She does not usually measure how much sesame oil or soy sauce or chicken broth goes in, yet her pancit turns out light and never sodden. She checks the consistency of the vegetables, which must achieve an equal degree of doneness, "never anything that's crunchier or harder than anything else."

Keeping track of ingredient amounts and stove top temperatures, as Orinion obligingly did for this article, slows down her kitchen duty considerably. "My daughter said it was going to be *interesting*," she says with a beaming smile. "I never measure anything."

Then again, her children are keen on the results—not the work. "I tried to show the kids one time" how to make lumpia, Orinion sighs. "But they were sloppy. I said, no thanks!"

TAKE CHARGE

Where to put your money in 2010

Editor's Note: this is part of Take Charge of Your Money, a partnership between INQUIRER.net and Citibank to help readers handle their personal finances well.

Question: What investments are good to consider in 2010? The stock market took a dive during the global financial crisis but I hear it is recovering now. Where can one invest money this year to realize a profit?—Lauren

Answer: Now more than ever, investors have become more cautious in picking out places where they can invest their money. The recent global financial crisis is still fresh in the minds of people all over the world, and no one wants a repeat of what happened then, when currencies became weak and long-term savings lost their value.

Well now things are getting rosier. We have all learned lessons from the global financial crisis and its aftermath. One important lesson is to invest with your eyes wide open. That may seem easy to say but just how do you do that, you may ask?

Put simply, that means invest only in schemes you understand. Some investment vehicles are a little complicated to understand, and investors may find out too late that these are not the right ones for them.

Like clothes, investments must fit your personality. Investors who are aggressive in their positions usually have time on their hands, can take on risks and are interested in investment that offer high returns. They are usually suited for stocks. They probably won't mind the ups and downs of the market, bearing in mind that in the long run, they may be able to realize a much bigger profit. Those more conservative and who want to take things slow and sure may concentrate their investments in bonds and government securities.

What investments can be considered good this 2010? We don't have the capacity to say what is sure to happen in the future, so we cannot guarantee which investment will earn the most this year. But these tips below may help you in determining the right investment for you.

1. Ask yourself: What is your investment goal? Maybe you would like to invest your savings so it will grow more, enough to become down payment for a house in the future. Or maybe you are looking at starting your nest egg which you will use upon your retirement 30 years from now. Still another investment goal may be to grow your savings so that you will reach your emergency fund (six months' worth of expenses at least) in a year's time. By identifying your investment goal, you are making your plans more concrete, which will help you in mapping out your investment strategy. 2. Ask yourself: How much time do you have to invest? Once you know your savings goal, you will be able to determine how much time you have to leave your money in the investment before you need it. This is essential in identifying the right investment for you. Long-term funds may be held in stocks and bonds, while short-term funds needed for next year's tuition fees or emergency fund goal may be placed in a unit investment trust fund or mutual fund investing in the money market. 3. Study all aspects of an investment before committing to put money in. Don't just ask how much it may earn in the future or how much the interest rate is; find out how it works and how it behaves in the market. Stocks are pretty volatile, with market prices fluctuating due to demand and supply. Time deposits are safe but interest may be low, although higher than that offered by savings accounts. With bonds, you have to hold your money for the term of the bond to realize the full interest.

4. Research not only on how that particular investment has performed during the past year or so, but on what potential it has in the future. Has it started to recover and is on its way up after the global financial crisis? Note however that past performance is not indicative of future performance. You should be wary that though the performance of a particular investment may be good in the past, it is not a guarantee that it will also behave the same way in the future. Also, if it appears too good to be true, it's probably not true. Beware of investment scams.

5. Be open to studying new investment options. Depending on one's profile, investors may consider getting out of their comfort zone and consider new investment vehicles. For example, avid time deposit clients may look into government securities and corporate bonds to increase their potential portfolio returns (subject to taking higher risk attendant to these investments, of course). Investors in direct assets such as bonds and stocks may look into investment funds to gain the benefit of a professional fund manager.

There are timeless cardinal rules in investing. One of them is to diversify your investments. Don't put all your eggs in one basket. Spread out your investment in different asset classes to maximize your earnings potential. Moreover, spread out the timing of your entry into the financial markets over a period of time and not just 'one time-big time.' Specifically, consider the merits of entering in stages and cost averaging. The bulk of your investment pot, though, should be in an investment which suits your investment persona, time horizon, and investment goals.

Disclaimer: Readers are solely responsible for their own investment decisions and should thus conduct their own research and due diligence and obtain professional advice. INQUIRER.net will not be liable for any loss or damage caused by a reader's reliance on information obtained from our Web site.

Maharlika – PinoyStyle

Hayden Kho files P20K bail over sex video raps

Lovi returns Jolo's present——a car

By DOLLY ANNE CARVAJAL
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

A common friend of Jolo Revilla's and mine told me that Lovi Poe returned the car Jolo gave her last Christmas. "He's hurting. Jolo still loves Lovi," my source said. "He just hopes hindi totoo ang mga balitang lumalabas about Lovi."

Jolo's Facebook status reads: "Need to face my fears even if it hurts." A few minutes after he posted that, Lovi tagged him in a picture which appeared on Jolo's FB wall, but Jolo deleted the pic immediately. Was Lovi trying to add insult to injury? Did Lovi send back the car because her heart is now a full tank, courtesy of Ronald Singson?

My unsolicited advice to my kinakapatid Jolo: Love is never wasted. If it is not reciprocated, it flows back to soften and purify the heart.

■ ■ ■ ■

I'm sure you're curious to know what some celeb couples gave each other for Christmas. With all the love they got, they might as well say in unison: Christmas is us!

Kim Chui and Gerald Anderson: "I gave him an LV wallet. He gave me a pink bike."

Korina Sanchez-Roxas and Mar Roxas: "Mar's gift to me was a trip to Paris and watching fireworks from the Eiffel Tower. My gift to him would have been a surprise when we got to Paris. As plans changed and circumstances required, we had to postpone our Parisian holiday. That means we just exchanged hugs and kisses."

Regine Velasquez and Ogie Alcasid: "I gave Reg a Chanel bag and she gave me equipment for my recording studio."

Lucy Torres-Gomez and Richard Gomez: "We don't give each other gifts during Christmas. But throughout the year we always surprise each other with thoughtful little presents."

Priscilla Meirelles and John Estrada: "She gave me golf clubs and I gave her a Mac Book Pro."

Tintin Bersola-Babao and Julius Babao: "We gave each other CDs and DVDs for our collection, which we bought during our holiday break in Hong Kong—a family pre-Christmas tradition."

Mariel Rodriguez and Zanjoe Marudo: "I gave him an iPod-touch. Secret na lang 'yung gift niya sa akin (laughs)."

■ ■ ■ ■

I am sad that my "second mom" Tita Nena (Amalia Fuentes) and my kumareng Liezl are at odds again.

Although Tita Nena loves Liezl dearly, she has an unusual way of showing it. Both of them should not have granted those TV interviews which only did more harm than good to their volatile relationship.

I remember hiding from Tita Nena for six hours as she waited for me to come home at the time when she wanted to interrogate me about Liezl's elopement with Albert Martinez. She knew that Liezl and I don't keep secrets from each other. I didn't want to commit a breach of trust with Liezl so I didn't divulge anything to Tita Nena.

Liezl and Albert had so many struggles in the US but they stuck together. That's why I cried at their church wedding where I was one of the bridesmaids.

It's been 25 years since that day. Maybe aside from Liezl and Albert renewing their marriage vows, Tita Nena and Liezl should also renew their vows as mother and daughter—so not only Liezl's cancer might be completely healed, but their relationship as well.

■ ■ ■ ■

Lotlot de Leon had a happy reunion with her mom Nora Aunor in the United States last Christmas.

I remember Ate Guy used to frequent our house when I was growing up. Ma took the Superstar's deepest secrets with her to the grave.

Lot is my kinakapatid. Even when we don't see each other often, we somehow feel connected.

That's why I'm happy to know that all is well between Ate Guy and Lot. Let their picture on this page say the rest.

■ ■ ■ ■

I asked director non-pareil Joey Reyes what changes he wants to see in the local show biz industry this year.

"Greater and wider patronage of good and deserving indie movies," he said. "Greater respect given to the film and TV workers as creative agents and not merely as instruments for acquiring profit. A healthier and more constructive spirit of competition among studios and networks. The end of media monopolies."

Easier said than done, but doable if only the biz movers and shakers would be willing to. If they badly want change to happen, it will.

■ ■ ■ ■

Eugene Domingo is excited to start shooting "Here Comes The Bride." After the tremendous success of her launching movie, "Kimmydora," doesn't she feel pressured to outdo herself?

"Not at all," Uge says. "In fact, I am just so excited to do more films this year. I'm meeting with creative minds about story lines and concepts. It's all about helping each other in making a worthwhile film."

Kudos to Uge who takes fun (in making movies) seriously!

■ ■ ■ ■

LJ Moreno is all agog for her wedding with cager Jimmy Alapag on Aug. 19 "He proposed last October 1," the bride-to-be says. "He threw a surprise birthday party for me. He blindfolded me from the house all the way to the hotel. When I took off the blindfold, all our friends and family were there."

LJ and Jimmy are a welcome addition to the list of actress/basketball player couples. May their union never have foul trouble and always have the winning shot.

By DJ YAP
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Former celebrity surgeon Hayden Kho Jr. posted bail of P20,000 Wednesday in connection with the charges filed against him by actress Katrina Halili over the spread of videos taken secretly of Kho's sexual encounters with Halili and other women.

Kho, accompanied by one of his counsels, paid the amount for his conditional freedom even before a warrant for his arrest could be served by the Pasig court hearing his case, his lawyer Lorna Kapunan said.

"We didn't want to wait for the arrest warrant to be issued," Kapunan said in a phone interview from Honolulu, Hawaii.

She said they received word that an arrest warrant had been issued against Kho by Judge Rodolfo Bonifacio of Pasig City Regional Trial Court Branch 159, and they did not want him to be subjected to a surprise arrest.

Kho is facing a complaint for violation of Republic Act 9262, or the Anti-Violence Against Women and Children Act, allegedly for causing the spread of the sex videos of him with Halili or other women on the Internet.

Earlier, a panel of Department of Justice prosecutors found cause to indict Kho on charges that he exploited Halili and other women by recording their sexual encounter without their consent.

The same panel, citing lack of evidence, dismissed the complaints against Kho's former girlfriend and celebrity doctor Vicki Belo, and three other alleged conspirators.

The arrest warrant against Kho, whose medical license has since been revoked, was issued after the court denied Kapunan's motion appealing the prosecutors finding of probable cause against the respondent.

Former celebrity surgeon Hayden Kho Jr.

Ex-beauty queen, actress Mila Ocampo dies

By BAYANI SAN DIEGO JR.
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Mila Ocampo, mother of actress Snooky Serna, passed away Wednesday morning after a lingering battle with emphysema. She was 68.

Ocampo was also a beauty queen and actress before marrying Snooky's father, late actor Von Serna.

"My mom was very glamorous in her youth," Snooky told the Inquirer in a previous interview. "She was the first Miss Philippines Press Photography."

Ocampo appeared in a number of movies in the 1950s and 1960s—most notably, classics like Manuel Silos' "Biyaya ng Lupa" and Manuel Conde's "Juan Tamad Goes to Society."

In 1971, when daughter Snooky became a child star, Ocampo acted as manager and co-star in several films like "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star," "The Golden Child," "Living Doll," among others.

In the 1980s, when Snooky was built up by Regal Films as a teen star, Ocampo was also on hand as manager and co-star in movies like "Underage," "Strangers in Paradise," "Summer Holiday," "Santa Claus is Coming to Town," "Experience," among others.

"She was a kind-hearted lady," said filmmaker Elwood Perez who directed Ocampo in "Pakawalan Mo Ako" and "Santa Claus."

Ocampo appeared in movies until the 1990s—in "Sinungaling Mong Puso" (1992) and "Paano Kung Wala Ka Na" (1997).

In an interview held last year, Snooky expressed her devotion to her mom. "I almost lost her . . . nag-50-50 siya. We have a love-hate relationship, but her illness has made me realize a lot of things. It has made me thankful for the little time we still have together. She really means a lot to me."

Ocampo is survived by her children Snooky, Anton and Julian.

Ocampo's wake is at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels in Parañaque. Cremation is set on Saturday.

From Panday to Pacman, a simple tip

By BAYANI SAN DIEGO JR.
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Actor-politician Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. offers simple advice to boxing champ Manny Pacquiao when it comes to making movies.

While "Ang Panday," Revilla's entry to the Metro Manila Film Festival (MMFF), zoomed to No. 1 at the tills and won a lion's share of awards (including Best Actor for Senator Bong), Pacquiao's "Wapakman" floundered, critically and commercially.

"I think Manny just needs more time to prepare. If he really wants to make it as an actor, he needs to devote time to each project. He needs to be hands-on. That's the most important advice I can give him. He needs time to shoot and promote a movie properly," Revilla told his fellow Kapuso.

He is ecstatic about the strong performance of almost all entries in this year's MMFF, now on its 35th year.

"I'm happy because all the entries, except for one, made money. I believe it's only because Manny's movie encountered production problems. I heard that they weren't able to finish the special effects. Na-delay [It was delayed]. So they didn't have enough time to promote it well."

He insisted that he was not obsessed about being No. 1 at the box office.

ROMY HOMILLADA

"It doesn't matter if we're No. 1 or No. 2. What is important is that we are able to entertain the viewers," says Metro Manila Film Festival Best Actor Bong Revilla.

"I don't mind even if they say another movie is No. 1," he explained. "It's just friendly competition. It doesn't matter if we're No. 1 or No. 2. What is important is that we are able to entertain the viewers."

At press time, his action-fantasy flick, which emerged Best Picture as well, has earned over "P40 million after only four days."

"There's a big increase in earnings compared to last year's record," he said.

It's a close fight among the top moneymakers—with only a few thousand pesos separating each film. To what does he attribute the strong showing of almost all the entries this year?

All-star cast

"The festival had an all-star cast. Major stars, all good actors, from Tito Dolphy and Vic Sotto to Sharon Cuneta, joined the festival. Even the directors in this year's fest, the veterans and the newcomers, were all good," he noted.

This early, there is talk of a "Panday" sequel.

"We discussed the sequel at the cast party after the awards night [on Monday]," he said. "We really want to devote a lot of time to the sequel."

Since he will be busy with the senatorial campaign and politics, the "Panday" team, composed mainly of Rico Gutierrez and Jay Santiago of the visual effects outfit Riot Inc., plans to start shooting the complicated scenes in the first quarter of the new year.

Perfecting the original

"Since I'll be ready to shoot after the election, they'll only need to add my scenes to the special-effects shots taken earlier," he said.

This year's MMFF Best Actor said the productions teams in Imus and GMA Films have learned a lot from working on "Panday" for over a year.

"Whatever mistakes we made in the first one, we want to correct in the sequel. It's all about improving and perfecting the original, which is a tough act to follow," he said.

Maharlika – Opinyon

EDITORIAL

Sources of hope

The Latin phrase "annus horribilis" has been in the popular lexicon ever since Queen Elizabeth II used it to describe 1992, a year plagued by misfortune for her property and her family. The same has been said of 2009; it surely qualifies as one of the worst years in living memory.

It comes as no surprise, then, that polled before the year ended, an overwhelming majority of Filipinos from all walks of life (89 percent, according to the Social Weather Stations) expressed hopefulness about this year.

We have dwelt on the disasters and the grim events that hogged the headlines in 2009, the political and economic difficulties that beset a nation battered by natural calamities.

What we wish to do now is point out that even as official irresponsibility and impunity alienated the public, and the economy and nature battered the citizenry, we were able to witness heroism and compassion temper these events, giving hope and providing inspiration to all of us.

Suffice it to say that if we saw our political institutions preferring to live lavishly, lie constantly, exercise impunity with a near-total failure on the part of the citizenry to exact accountability, we saw individuals and even groups demonstrate how to serve humbly, and live lives that bear authentic witness to truth and public service.

While still far less prevalent than we hope, these witnesses to virtue and duty have helped the public to realize that official corruption and indifference have a price; and that the public has the means to change the situation for the better.

At the heart of this possibility—never a certainty, but a distinctly achievable goal if enough citizens set their mind to it—is our ongoing democratic project.

Surely many citizens feel optimistic about 2010 if only because a New Year brings New Life, a turning of the page. And yet in terms of our being local and national community members, optimism about 2010 is possible, even inevitable, because we live in a democracy where change is regularly scheduled. Each of us now has a chance, provided we registered as voters, to accomplish change without risking our lives or the stability of society.

So let us embrace that chance, and make the most of that opportunity. Let the divisions last a little longer, since every voter must pick sides come election day, but commit, as well, to our electoral exercise being marked not by fraud or terrorism, but a collective assertion of one person, one vote. Let us have polls marked by the public overcoming the obstacles to free suffrage put in our path by political operators and the politicians themselves.

Let us strive for a national election in which individual candidates may come out the victors but in which it is the country that comes out the biggest winner: by having a new administration with a mandate untainted by fraud or doubt; where the public can unite after nearly a decade of deepening divisions. Where the past no longer haunts us, but begins to recede as we finally start working together to build a better future.

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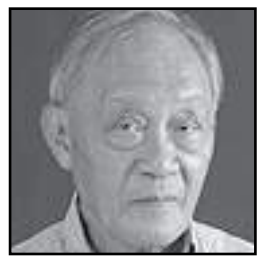
Damaged goods



Analysis

By AMANDO DORONILA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Philippine political convention WAS shattered on Monday when for the first time since the restoration of democracy in 1986, three disgraced and discredited top leaders filed certificates of candidacy for elected positions in a bid to regain power.

The assault on the ground rules of electoral politics was led by President Macapagal-Arroyo, who filed her certificate to run as representative of the second district of her home province, Pampanga, at the end of her term in May 2010. She thus became the first Filipino president to run for a congressional seat. Ms Arroyo's decision has opened the way for drastic change in the Philippine political landscape.

On the same day, Nov. 30, the deadline for the filing of COCs in the May election, disgraced President Joseph Estrada, who was convicted of plunder, filed to run for president; and Imelda Marcos, widow of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, filed to run for representative in the Ilocos Norte electorate of Marcos, who was deposed in the 1986 People Power Revolution.

Known for her extravagant lifestyle and fetish for collecting a few thousand pairs of shoes, Imelda Marcos was governor of the Metro Manila Authority, considered the second most powerful position in the land during the dictatorship. Her bid for a House seat is interpreted as an attempt to regain political power, using Congress as a platform to reenter politics and rehabilitate the Marcos legacy, marred by a record of corruption in government that sent the economy to its knees, of human rights violations and abuse of power.

Her reentry into active politics has triggered national controversy as much as the decision of President Arroyo, who is barred by the Constitution from seeking reelection after she serves out her six-year elected term in May, to seek an inferior position as member of the House.

Whatever the real motives behind the bids of President Arroyo or of Imelda Marcos, both are politically damaged goods seeking a second chance to better their legacies.

President Arroyo is winding down her term engulfed in corruption scandals, buffeted by the turbulence over the massacre of 57 unarmed people by armed bands of political warlords in Maguindanao, and stigmatized by the lowest popularity ratings ever received by any Filipino president since the 1986 People Power Revolution that toppled the Marcos dictatorship.

Estrada is no less damaged goods, but he is even more ambitious than either Ms Arroyo or Marcos. He is seeking election directly to the presidency, not just a parliamentary seat as a platform to return to the presidency, despite the fact that he was not only impeached by the House and tried by the Senate acting as the impeachment tribunal, for receiving pay-offs from jueteng, an illegal form of gambling. The trial was aborted after the Senate voted to suppress disclosure of bank documents. The suppression provoked a street insurrection that forced the collapse of his government, leading to the accession of then Vice President Arroyo to the presidency. He was prosecuted after he lost his office for plunder and was convicted. He was pardoned by President Arroyo. Estrada's prospects for a second chance are dim.

While Estrada is not considered as a serious contender for the presidency, the decision of President Arroyo to seek a seat in Congress is the center of a controversy and public outrage. It has provoked a demand for her resignation. She is criticized for trying to use a seat in Congress as a springboard to engineer a constitutional revision to shift to the parliamentary system through which she can maneuver her way to be elected prime minister. Given the dynamics of building alliances in parliament starting from zero base, I consider this scenario far-fetched and too hypothetical. This scenario is a weak argument for demanding her resignation.

The stronger and more persuasive argument to justify her resignation comes former President Fidel V. Ramos, founder of the majority coalition of the administration, the merged Lakas-Kampi-CMD parties, the political machine of the President. Ramos has urged the President to step down immediately after filing her certificate of candidacy, instead of staying in office until the expiration of her term in May. Her continued stay in power gives her an unfair advantage over rivals, Ramos said. "In the interest of fair play, GMA should resign so as not to give her undue advantage over whoever will run against her," he said.

The President has visited her electorate 50 times this year, showering it with public works projects. Her callousness has sparked outrage.

During the next few months until the May election, the President will continue to be clothed with the vast powers of the presidency, including those of the commander in chief of the armed forces, the power of appointment and removal from office of government personnel, and dispenser of patronage. Ramos pointed out that faced with such odds, nobody has a chance to win against her.

What Ramos did not say is that during the campaign season, the President can use these resources available to her to assist administration candidates for Congress to build a majority in the legislature behind the project of amending the Constitution to shift to the parliamentary system.

But there is no way to stop the President from pursuing this objective. She will dig in and defy demands for her resignation. This option is confrontational. It has the ingredients of a fiery exit.

Cause and effect

There's The Rub

By CONRADO DE QUIROS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Looking back, it was an accident waiting to happen.

I do not just mean that in the sense that the massacre of 57 people in Maguindanao was an event everyone knew would happen. That it was just a matter of time, place, and scale of atrocity. I mean that in a larger sense. In the sense that there was something inevitable about it, given the signal, message, and example the national government had been sending all this time.

There are three of them. They bear directly on what happened in Maguindanao as cause does to effect.

The first is the theft of the vote in 2004. The coming to light of the "Hello, Garci" tape in particular, not least with its revelations of Virgilio Garcillano proposing the kidnapping of a public schoolteacher in Tawi-Tawi and President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo assenting by silence, sent forth a powerful message. Henceforth, the vote meant nothing. Henceforth, keeping power meant everything. Henceforth, doing everything in one's power to win power and keep power, including stealing, kidnapping, and where necessary, killing, is perfectly acceptable.

The Ampatuans' participation in the theft of the vote moreover guaranteed them impunity. It wasn't just Garci who had made Arroyo win in Muslim Mindanao, it was the Ampatuans too. That Fernando Poe Jr. got zero votes in a place he was worshipped as hero was either a statistical impossibility or the product of fear so absolute no one dared signify otherwise. Either way, it encouraged the Ampatuans to up the ante on terror and violence, the two things the Arroyo and US governments pass themselves off as fighting.

Going further, Arroyo defended herself from threats of unseating by force. Specifically by investing in Hermogenes Esperon and Norberto Gonzales, and by threatening martial law then and threatening martial law now. Arguably it's institutional violence and not bloodcurdling violence, but it's violence nonetheless. Arguably it's nothing like the biblical or Koranic smiting of enemies, but it's a modern-day, efficiency-oriented, facsimile of it nonetheless.

The second is the killings of political activists. Arguably too, that was done over a period of time and a lot more invisibly. If Arroyo's hordes hadn't gotten carried away and made Jonas Burgos disappear for good, they themselves might have disappeared in the thicket of anonymity and public apathy. But for all that, it is far more bloodcurdling in a deeper sense. The quantity alone suggests so—more than tenfold the number of the Ampatuans' victims. As to the quality, well, ask yourself who's the more monstrous, Attila who swept over the countryside raping and pillaging, or Hitler who sent six million Jews up in smoke perfectly clinically.

The wholesale murder of political activists upped the ante even more on what was permissible under the new order of things. Such was the ease with which this could be done—not least because of the apathy that had settled on the minds of the populace, not unlike the dread that had taken hold of the hearts of the Maguindanaoans—the perpetrators no longer bothered hiding their hand.

Philip Alston did point to Jovito Palparan as the immediate culprit, while noting that he was merely carrying out a policy of the state. The military was just as quick to point to the New People's Army as Andal Ampatuan to point to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) after being caught pretty much in the act. If you were the Ampatuans, why should you think Arroyo has any right to prevent you from massacring your enemies? At least, praise the Lord, or Allah, you're fanatically honest, or honestly fanatical, about it.

If the Ampatuans hadn't gotten carried away, little caring whether they butchered partisan or journalist, who knows? For all its heinousness—done deliberately to dissuade the stoutest of challengers—the atrocity might have drawn routine condemnation but slipped into the night as just another one of those nasty things that happen down there, wreaked by Muslim and Christian alike, by Abus and warlords alike.

The third is a culture that rewards deviltry and punishes decency, which is the culture that underlies the culture of impunity itself. Why should the Ampatuans fear retribution, or imagine that Arroyo, who would not be there except for them—and who would no longer be there if they confessed to that earlier crime—would not protect them in their hour of need? Everyone who has done nasty things for Arroyo has seen his station in life improve.

Palparan, who carried out the execution of political activists with a zeal over and beyond the call of bloodlust, was promoted to general and thence to (party-list) congressman. Esperon, who betrayed his comrades-in-withdrawal-of-support and who thenceforth vowed death and destruction to Arroyo's enemies, has seen his star blaze beyond the normal sheen of the cluster of stars on a general's shoulder. Mike Defensor, Lito Atienza, and Avelino Razon, who helped kidnap Jun Lozada and cover it up, have gotten a joint venture with a Chinese company to mine nickel, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and the post of Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, respectively.

Arguably, the Ampatuans' atrocity did not advance Arroyo's cause, unlike the others'. And arguably what the Ampatuans did goes beyond "acceptable mayhem" even for an incontinently mayhem-filled place. But why shouldn't they be allowed now and then to commit atrocity purely, simply and exclusively for themselves? Arroyo has. Why shouldn't they be the epitome of warlordism, corrupting everything they touch, showing resolve of a scale, order and viciousness never known before, and plotting to rule forever by the threatened or real extinction of their enemies? Arroyo is.

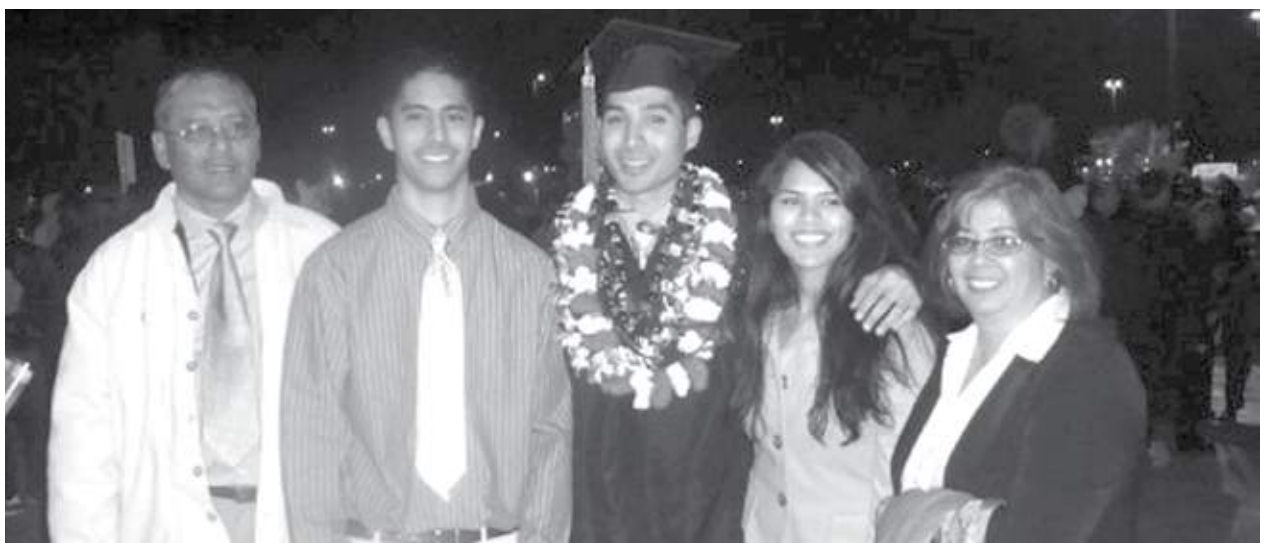
Like I said, cause and effect.

Maharlika – Samu't Sari

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT
Happy, happy birthday to "Ms. Classic" aka Arisa Peters. We love you! From your Banana Dorks, family, and friends!
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

COURTESY VISIT
Guam organization leaders representing the Freely Associated States pay a courtesy visit on Guam Gov. Felix P. Camacho on Dec. 29, 2009. Local community leaders from the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands exchanged their thoughts and ideas on future endeavors in Guam with Camacho. Camacho also shared his thoughts on the military buildup, employment opportunities, and the recent Micronesian Executives' Chief Summit.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

JUBILEE DONATION
Tan Holdings president Jerry Tan buys 20 banquet tickets and donates $10,000 worth of construction cost for renovation and improvement for Mt. Carmel Cathedral. From left, Fr. Ryan Jimenez, Cathy Cepeda, Jerry Tan, Charles Cepeda and Fr. Ike Ayuyu.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



HOPING FOR A BETTER 2010
Tenants of the Traveler's Lodge in Garapan have their group pictures taken during their New Year's Eve party. Everybody enjoyed welcoming the new year and hoping for a better 2010. Thank you to Ka Hector for making this party possible.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CONGRATULATIONS!
Congratulations to Rufin Benavente Inos Jr., who graduated from the University of Las Vegas Nevada with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering on Dec. 15, 2009. Jun is a graduate of the Saipan Southern High School. In this photo are members of his proud family, from left, father Rufin, brother Vince, sister Rozanne, and his mother Thelma. His family on Saipan and Las Vegas are all proud of his achievement.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Children pose with their favorite "lechon" during the New Year's Eve party at the Traveler's Lodge in Garapan. Everybody enjoyed the fun and games during the party. Thanks to Jaja and Heids.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

YoungStyle

Time to get down with these CDs

By MOIRA E. MCLAUGHLIN
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

It's hard to find good kids music out there. You either get songs about ABCs and 123s, or songs about relationships and (ick!) love. So this holiday season, KidsPost set out to find good kids music. We looked for catchy tunes, funny lyrics and real musicians who just happen to be playing for you.

The following CDs fill the bill. The tunes are energetic, silly at times (but not goofy), clever (but not boring), danceable, cool and fun. We hope they will inspire you to rock!

Sarah Lee Guthrie and Family, "Go Waggaloo": Sarah's grandfather is Woody Guthrie, a well-known musician from a while ago. Sarah's music is beautiful and relaxing. She plays the guitar and sings. Her husband plays with her, and her daughters sing backup. It's a sweet, family CD. Think good campfire songs.

Peter Himmelman, "My Trampoline": If the song "Imagination" doesn't get you moving, check your shoes! Peter is a very talented musician. He's not just another goofy adult trying to make you laugh. The memorable tunes are fun and smart, and they will keep you humming all day.

Robbert Bobbert and the Bubble Machine: With a name like that, how can you go wrong? This CD is more electronic and modern-sounding. It's obvious that the band likes experimenting with different, weird sounds. "We R Super Heroes" is a totally fun song.

Charity and the JAMband, "Party Like a Twinkle Star": Girls can rock, too, and they can rock while singing about things such as pancakes and rocket ships. Check out Charity's funky "Row Row Row Your Boat." Or slow it down a little with the pretty song, "We Are Stardust."

Justin Roberts, "Pop Fly": Just because your parents find the lyrics (meaning the words) to these songs funny does not mean the tunes are any less cool. Justin seems to remember what it's like to be a kid. His songs are clearly about you.

THE WASHINGTON POST

With a name like Robbert Bobbert and the Bubble Machine, how can you go wrong? This CD is more electronic and modern-sounding. The band likes experimenting with different, weird sounds.

THE WASHINGTON POST

Charity and the JAMband on their "Party Like a Twinkle Star" CD show that girls can rock, too, and they can rock while singing about things such as pancakes and rocket ships.

THE WASHINGTON POST

It's hard to find good kids music out there, so this holiday season, KidsPost set out to find some. Just because parents find the lyrics to Justin Roberts' songs on "Pop Fly" funny does not mean the tunes are any less cool.

Ziggy Marley, "Family Time": This is happy music. It's a little like reggae. (That's a kind of music that started in Jamaica and makes you want to lift your shoulders up and down.) You want to sway and smile? This is your CD.

Jump With Jill, "Get Me Goin' ": Try to listen to "Healthy Is Good for Me" without moving your whole body. (Bet you can't!) Then see if you can name all the instruments you hear. There is a lot going on here. The words to the songs are about eating well and being healthy. (Jill is a doctor.) Boring, right? No! These songs will knock your socks off, they are so fun. Listen to this when you need an energy boost.

In its quest for good kids' music, KidsPost looked for catchy tunes, funny lyrics and real musicians who just happen to be playing for the younger crowd. Here are four: Sarah Lee Guthrie and Family, "Go Waggaloo"; Jump With Jill, "Get Me Goin' "; Peter Himmelman, "My Trampoline" and Ziggy Marley, "Family Time."

THE WASHINGTON POST

Kids' Books of 2009

By LAURIE MUCHNICK
(C) 2009, BLOOMBERG NEWS

Jack Frost, a whimsical duchess and a poodle who wants to change her reputation star in some of the season's standout picture books for children.

'The Duchess of Whimsy'

"The Duchess of Whimsy," by Randall de Seve and Peter de Seve (Philomel, $17.99). The duchess lives up to her name, sporting foot-high hair bedecked with feathers and trailing two tiny fairies. The Earl of Norm, a relentlessly ordinary guy, is hopelessly in love with her. How she comes to appreciate his qualities makes for a funny tale; there's a moral here, but it never overpowers the pleasure.

'Here Comes Jack Frost'

"Here Comes Jack Frost," by Kazuno Kohara (Roaring Brook, $12.99). A lonely little boy is befriended by Jack Frost, a spiky fellow who likes to throw snowballs, go sledding and play hide-and-seek in the woods. The simple linocut illustrations are stunning; with white figures on a blue background, they create an idealized wintry world.

'The Jungle Grapevine'

"The Jungle Grapevine," by Alex Beard (Abrams, $16.95). Beard, a painter, uses his travels in Africa to ground this tale of a game of telephone gone awry. Turtle tells Bird that the humor at the Watering Hole has been drying up lately. Bird tells Elephant the Watering Hole is drying up {lcub}hellip{rcub} and the rumor is off, getting progressively more outrageous. The pen-and-ink and watercolor drawings are elegantly stylized, giving an almost Art Deco look to the animals and plants.

'Kid Made Modern'

"Kid Made Modern," by Todd Oldham (Ammo, $22.95, 14.95 pounds). Here's a vibrant craft book with projects that kids will really want to make, inspired by 20th-century artists and designers such as Alexander Calder, Isamu Noguchi and George Nelson. Weave a belt out of duct tape, shredded plastic bags and twine. Print designs on T-shirts using potato mashers or bubble wrap. The book itself has a jazzy, colorful design and clear directions.

'The Secret Plan'

"The Secret Plan," by Julia Sarcone-Roach (Knopf, $16.99). This going-to-bed book finds Milo the elephant and his three feline friends, Henry, Harriet and Hildy, trying to avoid lights out so they can keep playing. The muted paint colors will put young listeners in the mood for a story and a nap.

'The Silver Spoon for Children'

"The Silver Spoon for Children: Favorite Italian Recipes" (Phaidon, $19.95). The bestselling Italian cookbook has been adapted for mini-foodies. The design is just right—fun but not cutesy. Recipes range from easy (prosciutto and melon) to challenging (roast leg of lamb in an herb crust with stuffed tomatoes), and of course include pizza dough and fresh pasta.

'Who Wants to Be a Poodle'

"Who Wants to Be a Poodle I Don't," by Lauren Child (Candlewick, $16.99; Puffin). Mademoiselle Verity Brulee loves her fluffy poodle, Trixie Twinkle Toes Trot-a-Lot Delight--but Trixie doesn't want a doggy manicure; she wants to jump in puddles and be daring.

Child combines a baroque mix of typefaces and her usual busy-busy collages into a confection that will be appreciated by lovers of "Fancy Nancy" and "Pinkalicious."

'1001 Children's Books'

"1001 Children's Books You Must Read Before You Grow Up," edited by Julia Eccleshare (Universe, $36.95; Cassell, 20 pounds). This fat anthology, with full-color illustrations on every page, will remind you of forgotten favorites and help you catch up on newer classics. The book tilts slightly British, but includes titles from around the world.

Funny holidays: National Nothing Day, Kid Inventors' Day, Jell-O Week & More

By MOIRA E. MCLAUGHLIN
(C) 2010, THE WASHINGTON POST

JANUARY

16: National Nothing Day! Celebrate absolutely nothing today.
17: Kid Inventors' Day.

FEBRUARY

7-13: Jell-O Week. How much Jell-O can you consume in one week?
8-14: Laughter Week! Hahahaha! Laugh this week. Although we recommend you do not laugh and eat Jell-O at the same time.

MARCH

March is Optimism Month. It's going to be great.
4: Do Something Day! Move closer to achieving your goal. You can do it.
7-13: Celebrate Your Name Week. What a good name it is!

APRIL

1: There is no April Fools' Day this year (see note below).

MAY

2-8: This is KidsPost's favorite week. It's Kids Win Week!
6: No Homework Day.
8: No Socks Day.

JUNE

17-19: Ice Cream Days.

JULY

It's National Blueberry Month, National Hot Dog Month, National Ice Cream Month and National Horseradish Month. It's gonna be a busy month.

AUGUST

Happiness Happens Month
15: National Relaxation Day. Ahhhh.

SEPTEMBER

5: Be Late for Something Day.
5-11: National Waffle Week.
12: National Hug Your Hound Day.

OCTOBER

10: National Cake Decorating Day.
12: International Moment of Frustration Scream Day. At 7 a.m., scream to get your frustrations out!
30: Haunted Refrigerator Night

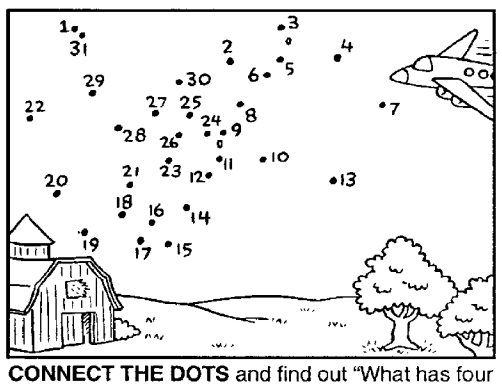
NOVEMBER

3: Cliche Day. Because, why not?
7: Wisconsin holds the 10th annual International Tongue Twister Contest.
13: World Kindness Day.

DECEMBER

6: Saint Nicholas Day.
21: Humbug Day. Bah!

Note: April Fool! (Did we get you?!)



CONNECT THE DOTS and find out "What has four legs and flies in the air?"

Answer: Two birds.

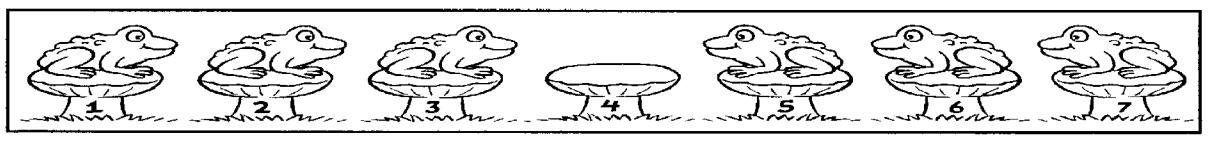
Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

A HOPPING GOOD PUZZLE!

Below we have seven toadstools occupied by six froggies. Three are green and three are brown. Your problem is to make them change places on the toadstools in the fewest possible moves according to the following rules. (Use pennies and nickels to represent the frogs.)

1. Each frog can only jump to the next empty toadstool.
2. The green frogs must jump left to right; the brown frogs must jump right to left.
3. If one frog is separated from a vacant toadstool by a single frog, it may jump over this frog to occupy the empty toadstool.



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DON'T BARK UP THE WRONG TREE ON THIS ONE! Hidden in the grid to the right are the names of 17 kinds of trees. Starting at any letter, spell a name by going from letter to letter horizontally, vertically or diagonally. You can use each letter only once when spelling any one name. As an example, we've given you OAK by circling the letters. Good luck!

(O)	(A)	W	R	A	S
(K)	L	I	N	B	D
L	F	P	E	E	A
O	P	A	C	H	G
W	M	L	R	U	I
S	U	E	S	P	F

Answers: Oak, elm, pine, beach, pear, apple, maple, plum, palm, fig, sumac, beech, willow, spruce, cedar, larch, fir.

The Froggie Puzzle Answer: The jumps are as follows: 5 to 4, 3 to 5, 2 to 3, 4 to 2, 6 to 4, 7 to 6, 5 to 7, 3 to 5, 1 to 3, 2 to 1, 4 to 2, 6 to 4, 5 to 6, 3 to 5, 4 to 3.

Strange BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

■ It was American humorist Evan Esar who came up the following definition: "Statistics: The only science that enables different experts using the same figures to draw different conclusions."

■ The Emperor Charlemagne, who conquered much of Western and Central Europe during the first century, had an unusual relationship with his daughters. He refused to allow them to get married, but he evidently had no objections to their forming, shall we say, less formal relationships. He doted on his illegitimate grandchildren and even gave money and gifts to their fathers.

■ If you look at a list of the names of the 50 states, you'll find every letter of the alphabet except Q.

■ For reasons unknown, a law in New Jersey forbids the sale of cabbage on Sunday.

■ You won't be surprised to learn that the most dangerous device that is common in the modern world is the automobile. You might be surprised to learn, though, that the second most dangerous is the stair step.

■ You've probably never heard of Countess Rosa Branicka, but she accomplished an amazing feat. In the mid-19th century, at the age of 63, the wealthy Polish noblewoman became ill. The diagnosis given by experts in Germany was breast cancer, and immediate surgery was recommended. For reasons unknown, the countess declined the treatment, then set about purchasing her own surgical instruments. Once all the tools were assembled, Branicka checked into a hotel in Paris and removed the tumor herself. Reports indicate that she healed well and quickly, and lived to the ripe old age of 82.

■ The only chemical element that is not a solid at a temperature of absolute zero is helium; it remains a liquid.

■ ■ ■

Thought for the Day: "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work."—Thomas A. Edison

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MAGIC MAZE ● DOWN THE —

Q	A	X	U	Q	N	K	H	E	B	Y	V	S	P	M
E	J	H	E	M	B	Y	V	T	Q	O	L	I	G	D
B	L	Y	W	O	T	Y	R	P	M	K	I	F	D	B
Y	W	O	U	U	E	S	Q	O	M	K	I	F	D	B
Z	X	W	H	N	U	S	Q	O	N	L	J	R	H	F
D	C	A	M	T	N	Y	W	E	T	H	O	E	V	E
T	S	I	U	A	I	H	I	L	L	A	Q	V	N	S
P	H	O	N	I	A	B	L	S	D	T	O	I	K	E
C	P	I	H	N	R	F	B	I	E	C	L	R	C	B
S	B	Z	Y	W	D	V	Y	A	W	H	G	I	H	U
U	S	R	T	E	E	R	T	S	R	I	A	T	S	T

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Aisle	Hill	River	Street
Drain	Line	Road	Throat
Hatch	Mountain	Spout	Tubes
Highway	Rabbit hole	Stairs	

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	+		x		11
÷		+		+	
	x		–		33
+		+		x	
	x		+		21
3		24		20	

1 2 3 4 4 5 7 8 9

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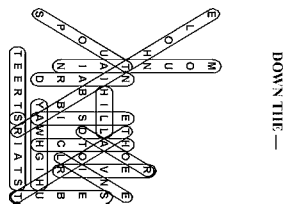
MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



DOWN THE —

GO FIGURE ANSWER

11	1	x	7	+	4
	+		+		÷
33	3	–	9	x	4
	x		+		+
21	5	+	8	x	2
	20		24		3

Don't delay puppy's vaccinations

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: Please remind your readers to vaccinate their puppies on schedule, exactly as advised by their veterinarian. My son, who lives in a community with many dog owners, heard recently that two puppies in the community died from parvovirus. Puppies are incredibly susceptible to this illness, and must be vaccinated against it. We recently rescued an adult dog, "Shady," who became very ill with parvo because she'd never been vaccinated. Fortunately, because she is bigger, she has responded well to treatment, but for a while she had a 50/50 chance. Most puppies don't have remotely as good a chance. Get them vaccinated!—Dee & Oz at Little Moose Farm

DEAR DEE & OZ: Thanks for the warning. Readers, if you are holding off on getting your pets vaccinated for any reason, take heed of this advice and schedule a vet visit today.

Parvovirus is a extremely serious disease in dogs that causes severe diarrhea and vomiting, which in turn leads to severe dehydration. This alone is dangerous for puppies, but parvovirus also can attack the heart muscle, which can lead to sudden death. Dogs that survive the infection often remain weakened for life. The virus is transmitted through contact, particularly with infected fecal matter (dog poo).

(Note: Not all cases of diarrhea and vomiting are parvovirus, but anytime a puppy exhibits the above symptoms and is feverish and lethargic, a vet should be contacted immediately.)

Puppies usually need multiple vaccinations over a few weeks to ensure the parvo vaccine takes effect, and then they should be vaccinated annually. So it's critical to keep puppies on the vaccination schedule recommended by your vet. Parvovirus is just one of many health dangers that vaccination can prevent.

■ ■ ■

Send your tips, questions and comments to Paw's Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or e-mail them to ask@pawscorner.com.

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Match wits with preschoolers

Ready for a game of concentration? When the weather brings kids indoors, or the big kids are off playing sports and your preschoolers are left behind, this match game is as much fun for them to make as it is to play. It will keep everyone entertained on a family game night, too.

First, your children get to go hunting through holiday cards, photos and stickers to cut and paste images onto game cards. Then it's time to put their whole minds—and yours—into it! But watch carefully as you play. You may not be a "match" for them in the end. Sometimes I think our grown-up minds are just a bit too cluttered to ace this game.

Here's the stuff you'll need to make a match game:

■ Eight to 16 2-inch-by-2-inch squares cut from poster board, or use smooth-sided juice lids from frozen juice cans

■ Four to eight matched pairs of cutouts from holiday cards and photos. Or use stickers, images from gift wrap, used postage stamps, tickets and even coins.

■ Household glue, a glue stick or double-sided tape.

Here's the fun:

Glue each item onto a square, making sure that there are identical items to make a pair. Make as many pairs as you wish.

To play the game: Shuffle the cards and arrange them face down on a table in rows.

The first player turns over one card. The player then turns over a second card. If it doesn't match the first card, the player turns the two back over, and the next player begins.

If a player matches the two cards, he or she keeps them and takes another turn. A player's turn ends when he or she can no longer make a match. The object of the game is to get the most matches.

■ ■ ■

Donna Erickson's award-winning television series "Donna's Day" airs on public television nationwide. Visit www.donnasday.com to find out when it airs on your local PBS station and to sign up for Donna's e-newsletter.

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Life & Style

Source: NBC weighing Leno return to late-night

NEW YORK (AP)—The future of "The Jay Leno Show" was in question Thursday, even as NBC defended its prime-time talk-show star amid Web site reports the program will soon be canceled or shifted into late night.

An industry Web site called FTV declared that Leno's show would be canceled as soon as the Winter Olympics begin next month, when much of the regular programming on NBC will be pre-empted for Olympics coverage.

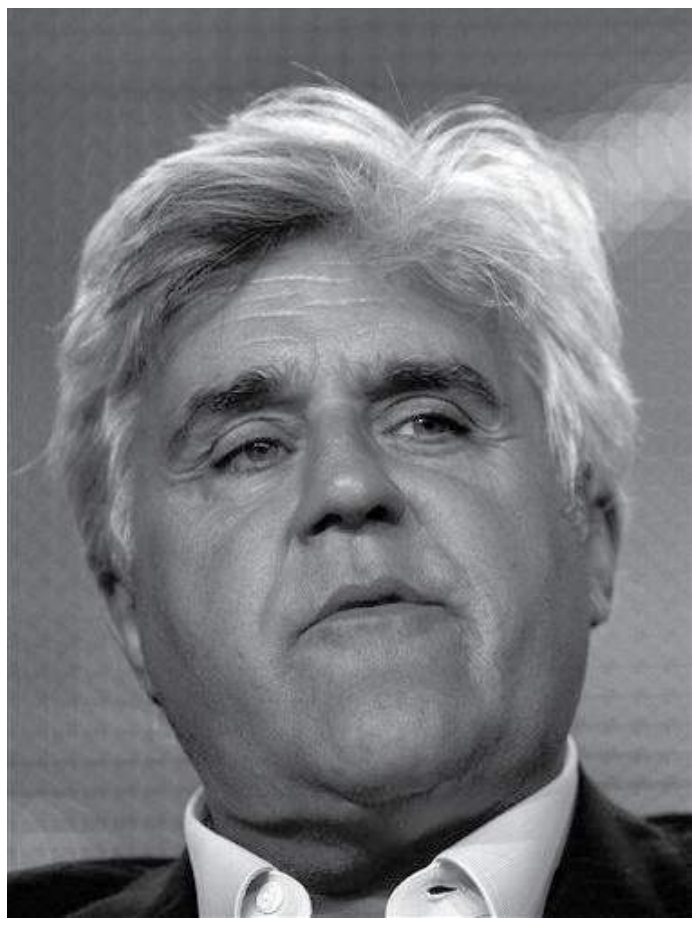
Then the TMZ Web site, citing undisclosed sources, said Leno's show would go on hiatus Feb. 1. Following the Olympics (which take place in Vancouver from Feb. 12-28), Leno will take back the 11:35 p.m. EST time slot he occupied for 17 years that ended last May.

This would make Leno's successor at "The Tonight Show," Conan O'Brien, "the odd man out," TMZ said.

But late Thursday, The New York Times reported that NBC executives have a plan in the works to return Leno to 11:35 p.m. in a half-hour edition, pushing O'Brien to 12:05 a.m., followed by "Late Night with Jimmy Fallon" at 1:05 a.m.

The revamped lineup would go into effect after NBC concludes its Olympics coverage, the Times reported.

NBC spokeswoman Rebecca Marks declined to comment on the report.



AP

In this Aug. 5, 2009 file photo, Jay Leno speaks during the panel for "The Jay Leno Show" at the NBC Universal Television Critics Association summer press tour in Pasadena, Calif.

Since September, Leno has hosted an hour-long talk and comedy show weeknights at 10 p.m. EST. But his lackluster ratings in prime time have upset NBC affiliate stations who complain they are getting weaker lead-in audiences for their local late newscasts than from past NBC fare.

In a statement released Thursday, NBC said, "Jay Leno is one of the most compelling entertainers in the world today. As we have said all along, Jay's show has performed exactly as we anticipated on the network. It has, however, presented some issues for our affiliates. Both Jay and the show are committed to working closely with them to find ways to improve the performance."

While this statement didn't clearly refute the Web reports that Leno's show would be dropped, a clarification from NBC executives denied "The Jay Leno Show" has been canceled.

During his monologue Thursday, Leno milked some laughs from the "rumor floating around that we were canceled. I heard it coming in this morning on the radio. So far, no one has said anything to me."

But if it's true, he joked, "it will give us time to do some traveling. I understand that (the) Fox (network) is beautiful this time of year."

"I don't think there is any truth to the rumors," he went on, referring to his frontrunner status in the ratings when NBC took him off "The Tonight Show."

"See, it's always been my experience that NBC only cancels you when you're in first place," Leno cracked. "So we are fine. We are OK."

O'Brien made no mention of the scuttlebutt in his monologue.

Thursday night, NBC issued yet another statement expressing the network's commitment "to keeping Conan O'Brien on NBC. He is a valued part of our late-night lineup, as he has been for more than 16 years and is one of the most respected entertainers on television."

On Thursday, the rumors surrounding Leno's fate left industry analyst Shari Anne Brill mystified.

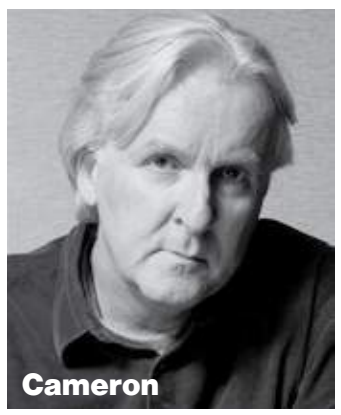
"For me, the big question is what is going to happen at 10 p.m. going forward," Brill said, "because that's a critical time period to promote the late local news, and it was the affiliates' dissatisfaction with their lower audience numbers that was the catalyst for speculation on this purported move (for Leno) into late-night."

"The unsolved mystery is what happens at 10 p.m." said Brill of Carat USA.

What sparked Thursday's flurry of Web reports was unclear, but coincided with reports this week that NBC has as many as 18 pilots for prospective new series—presumably more than would be needed to replenish a prime-time schedule for a network that expected to continue filling five hours weekly with Leno's show.

The speculation may also be a run-up to the winter TV Critics Press Tour, which begins this weekend in Los Angeles. At this annual conclave, network programming initiatives are unveiled for media reporters. In turn, reporters have a forum to grill network brass on programming questions. NBC's session is scheduled for Sunday.

Cameron, Tarantino score Directors Guild nominations



Cameron

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The science-fiction blockbuster "Avatar" has earned James Cameron his latest nomination for the top honor from the Directors Guild of America.

Cameron won the guild prize 12 years ago for "Titanic." Also nominated are Kathryn Bigelow for the Iraq War drama "The Hurt Locker," Lee Daniels for the Harlem teen tale "Precious: Based on the Novel 'Push' by Sapphire," Jason Reitman for the recession-era story "Up in the Air" and Quentin Tarantino for the World War II hit "Inglourious Basterds."

Like the Golden Globes on Jan. 17, the awards put Cameron up against ex-wife Bigelow, a first-time Directors Guild nominee.

Daniels and Reitman also earned their first guild film nominations, while Tarantino previously was nominated for 1994's "Pulp Fiction."

Directors Guild picks usually are a good reflection of how the category will shake out at the Academy Awards. The winner at the guild awards usually goes on to win the directing Oscar, as Cameron did for "Titanic" and last year's guild winner, Danny Boyle, did for "Slumdog Millionaire."

The guild announces TV, documentary and commercial nominations Friday. Awards will be presented at a banquet Jan. 30 in Los Angeles, three days before Oscar nominations come out.

If the Oscar nominees match the guild picks, it would be one of the most diverse lineups ever in the directing category, which usually consists of five white men.

Daniels would follow John Singleton ("Boyz N the Hood") as only the second black filmmaker nominated for best director. Bigelow would be only the fourth woman nominated for director, following Lina Wertmuller ("Seven Beauties"), Jane Campion ("The Piano") and Sofia Coppola ("Lost in Translation").

Director Norman Jewison, whose films include "In the Heat of the Night," "A Soldier's Story" and "Moonstruck," will receive the guild's lifetime-achievement award.

'American Idol' thinks young, edgy in ninth season

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"American Idol" was the colossus that dominated television in the new century's first decade, generating top ratings, a heady share of buzz and a handful of bankable stars including Kelly Clarkson, Carrie Underwood and Jennifer Hudson.

"THIS is `American Idol,'" host Ryan Seacrest first intoned in 2002, and the singing contest that was a summer surprise turned into an annual visitor with staying power.

Whether it can retain its status this year, let alone through the second decade, is a crucial question for its home base, Fox, as well as the network's competitors and the seemingly bottomless well of aspiring singers who see it as a shortcut to discovery.

It's a challenge for a series that, entering its ninth season Tuesday (8 p.m. EST), is undergoing its biggest shake-up yet with Ellen DeGeneres taking the place of Paula Abdul on the judging panel that includes Simon Cowell, Randy Jackson and, back for her sophomore turn, Kara DioGuardi.

Can "Idol" hang on as the No. 1 series, a spot it's held for five years among all viewers and for six years among 18-to-49 year olds, a demographic much favored by advertisers?

Yes, said industry analyst Shari Anne Brill—for now.

"It will remain the top-rated show through this year," said Brill of Carat USA. After that, she said, it's a guessing game, especially if uber-judge Cowell decides to exit after this season and "Idol" is deprived of his sharp bite (or at least loud bark).

The show's producers and Fox pay due respect to the judging panel but say what counts most are the "kids," their favored term for the mostly 20-something contestants angling for a record contract and career, such as last year's winner Kris Allen and runner-up Adam Lambert.

In focus groups with viewers, it's about contestants that provoke the most emotion, said Fox executive Preston Beckman, adding, "They want to root for someone and see someone win."

DeGeneres brings "something unique and will be the nurturing person on the show and create an interesting dynamic with Simon. But at the end of the day, it's not on her shoulders to carry the show," he said.

Cecile Frot-Coutaz, CEO of series producer FremantleMedia North America and an "Idol" executive producer, said she's nothing but bullish on the future.

"Thank God it's an event, like a sporting event, so it rises above the crowd," she said.

Its ad rates are a cut above, too: A 30-second commercial on "Idol" cost around $500,000 last season and hit more than $600,000 for the finale, according to the ad-buying firm Initiative, while other top 10 shows were getting closer to about $250,000 for half-minute spots.

AP

In this undated publicity image released by Fox, new "American Idol," judge Ellen DeGeneres is shown.

A promising sign for "Idol" is the overall broadcast TV picture. After years of steadily losing viewers to cable and other distractions, including the Internet, three of the four major networks (Fox among them) showed an unexpected audience increase over 2008 at the start of the new season.

To be sure, viewership for "American Idol" has been shrinking since its 2005 peak when it averaged 30 million weekly viewers, according to research chief Brad Adgate of Horizon Media. The median age of viewers has shot up, from nearly 32 years old in the first season to about 44 last year.

In a bid for the youth vote, Fox promotions for "American Idol" are emphasizing a "more authentic feeling, raw and emotional," Beckman said, countering any notion that it's "lost its soul."

A guest judge such as Katy Perry represents the kind of artist who appeals to teenagers and young adults, he said. Perry, Victoria Beckham and other celebrities filled in for the departed Abdul for filming of the cross-country auditions that kick off the season.

Younger viewers are especially taken with performers such as Lambert and fellow finalist Allison Iraheta who have "a bit more edge to them," Beckman said, so that was a focus of the contestant search.

This year's auditions proved rewarding, Frot-Coutaz said.

"We have good kids and also some kids who come to the show with real stories, who have that kind of emotional core you need to be a great performer," she said, including some with difficult lives who see the show as a "lifesaver."

Viewers may find it easier to connect with the contestants, or at least identify them. After last season's approach in the semifinals allowed for long stretches in which some singers were off camera, the show is returning to a boy-girl division that has all contestants sing each week and face elimination until the field is pared to 12 finalists.

Mariah Carey justifies 'that' speech

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Mariah Carey jokingly blames her loony acceptance speech at the Palm Springs International Film Festival awards on director Lee Daniels.

"The thing is me and Lee hadn't see each other in a long time, and then he was presenting my award, so he starts off immediately with inside jokes," Carey said backstage at the People's Choice Awards Wednesday night, where she was named favorite R&B artist.

"We had splashes of champagne, and I love Lee but he's a bad influence," the singer said and laughed.

Carey gave a long, rambling acceptance speech after being named Breakthrough Actress for her performance in "Precious: Based on the Novel 'Push' by Sapphire" on Tuesday. Daniels directed the movie.

The video of her speech was one of the most popular on the Internet, and led to jokes at Carey's expense.

Mariah Carey, winner of the favorite R&B artist award, poses backstage at the People's Choice Awards on Wednesday Jan. 6, 2010, in Los Angeles.

AP

The 39-year-old says she was rushing to receive the honor and didn't eat enough. She also says people shouldn't take the speech too serious.

"If people don't understand me and think I'm just like this girl that stands by a microphone and sings 'Hero,' then they're definitely not going to get me," she explained. "But if people knew me better, they would understand I have a sense of humor, and basically that's what gets me through life."

Plea deal for Ohio chief in Parker-Broderick case

ST. CLAIRSVILLE, Ohio (AP)—The second Ohio police chief charged with snooping on the woman who bore twins for Sarah Jessica Parker and Matthew Broderick pleaded no contest Thursday to a misdemeanor.

Chad Dojack entered the plea to a dereliction-of-duty count during a pretrial hearing. In exchange, prosecutors dropped felony charges of complicity to burglary and complicity to receiving stolen property. A trial on those charges had been scheduled for next week.

Dojack is chief of Bridgeport in eastern Ohio. He and the ex-chief of neighboring Martins Ferry, Barry Carpenter, were accused of scheming to take things from the pregnant woman's home in Martins Ferry to sell to paparazzi.

Carpenter was convicted in November on charges of receiving stolen property, theft in office and evidence tampering but acquitted of other counts, including burglary. He was sentenced last month to two years, eight months in prison.

Dojack faces up to 90 days in jail at his sentencing next week.

Messages seeking comment were left for T. Shawn Hervey, the special prosecutor in the case, and Dojack's attorney, Edward Sustersic.

Canadian claims Keanu Reeves fathered her kids

BARRIE, Ontario (AP)—A paternity suit launched by a Canadian woman seeking millions of dollars from Keanu Reeves was thrown out of court Thursday.

Karen Sala claimed she had a sexual relationship with Reeves during and after her marriage and that they lived together.

Reeves vehemently denies ever having met the woman.

Sala was seeking 3 million Canadian dollars ($2.8 million) a month in spousal support, retroactive to November 2006. She also wanted $150,000 ($144,000) a month in child support, going back to June 1988.

However, a judge in Ontario dismissed the case, saying Sala's allegations were "so incredible" that no reasonable judge would accept them.

Judge Fred Graham said any trial would be "a waste of limited judicial resources," after Sala disputed DNA proving Reeves was not the father. Sala claimed the results had been tampered with or that Reeves used hypnosis to affect the results.

"I do know for a fact that he is the biological father," said Sala, who is representing herself, adding that she has proof but cannot show it to the court.

She said Reeves grew up down the street from her and she has known him since she was four or five. She did not connect him to the actor until much later because she knew him by the name Marty Spencer, she said.

Lawyer Lorne Wolfson, representing Reeves, suggested Sala's ex-husband is in fact the father of the children, as stated in documents in their divorce proceedings.

Sala had declined to bring a motion to have her ex-husband's DNA tested and has refused to produce her children's birth certificates, Wolfson said.

Reeves, 45, grew up in Toronto before leaving for Hollywood in 1986. He starred in the "Matrix" films as well as "Speed" and "Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure."

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

Actor Gary Coleman released from hospital

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Gary Coleman's agent says the "Diff'rent Strokes" actor is fine after a slight seizure sent him to a Los Angeles hospital for less than a day. Agent Robert Malcolm says the 41-year-old Coleman was released from a Los Angeles hospital Wednesday night. He was taken there by ambulance earlier in the day after feeling faint and vomiting at a hotel. Malcolm says he returned to the hotel after his release and planned to go home later Thursday. Coleman, who has had two failed kidney transplants, was in town to meet with producers of his latest film, "Midgets vs. Mascots." Coleman says he wants them to remove a brief scene of frontal nudity that he did not authorize.

CNN's Ali Velshi set to anchor weekday newscast

NEW YORK (AP)—CNN chief business correspondent Ali Velshi will soon be part of the "CNN Newsroom" anchor lineup. CNN said Thursday that Velshi will host a two-hour newscast weekdays at 1 p.m. Eastern. He joins Kyra Phillips and Tony Harris, who each anchor earlier segments of the "Newsroom" block. He will be followed at 3 p.m. by a new two-hour program hosted by Rick Sanchez. It's called "Rick's List." Sanchez currently anchors an afternoon portion of "CNN Newsroom." Velshi is based in Atlanta and has been with CNN since 2001. He will continue as co-anchor of "Your $$$$$" ("Your Money") airing Saturdays and Sundays.

Koppel being considered for return to ABC News

NEW YORK (AP)—Ted Koppel may soon return to ABC News—this time during daylight hours. The former "Nightline" host is being considered as a host of "This Week," ABC's Sunday morning political talk show. That's according to two people with knowledge of the discussions who requested anonymity because they are not authorized to talk about them. ABC is looking for a replacement for George Stephanopoulos, the new co-host of "Good Morning America." Koppel, who is 69, left "Nightline" in 2005. He works as a commentator for BBC America and NPR.

ABC News spokesman Jeffrey Schneider said several people are being talked to about "This Week." He says no offers have been made or are imminent. ABC's Terry Moran and Jake Tapper, along with PBS' Gwen Ifill, are also considered candidates.

Reggae star Buju Banton pleads not guilty

TAMPA, Fla. (AP)—Jamaican reggae star Buju Banton has pleaded not guilty to a drug charge in a Florida federal court. Banton was arraigned Thursday on a charge of conspiring to buy more than five kilograms of cocaine from an undercover law enforcement officer in Sarasota last month. The 36-year-old singer, born Mark Myrie, did not seek bail. If he bonded out of jail, he would be held by immigration officials. Banton's attorney says his client is innocent and does not plan to seek a deal. Banton was arrested at his Tamarac home on Dec. 10, two days after federal authorities say he met with a confidential informant to discuss the drug purchase. Banton will likely miss the Jan. 31 Grammy Awards, where he is nominated for his latest album, "Rasta Got Soul."

White House gate-crashers on list for Vegas party

LAS VEGAS (AP)—The infamous couple who gate-crashed the White House are planning a Las Vegas nightclub outing, but this time they're definitely on the guest list. Would-be reality TV couple Tareq and Michaele Salahi are scheduled to party Jan. 16 at Pure Nightclub at Caesars Palace on the Las Vegas Strip. The party comes less than two months after the publicity-seeking Salahis made their way into a state dinner without being approved guests. Pure spokesman Michael Gilmartin says the couple is getting a flight, accommodations, dinner and an undisclosed sum of cash to appear at the club. Gilmartin says the arrangements are routine for nightclubs that bring in headline guests, but far less lucrative than offers made to A-list entertainers.

Overprotective parents won't acknowledge teen's true age

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I'm a 15-year-old girl whose parents treat me like an 8-year-old. They not only refuse to let me see any movie that isn't G-rated, but they still cut my meat for me! Once a week we go to the park, and they still push me on the swings.

I don't want to tell them it's embarrassing because I'm afraid I'll hurt their feelings. Please tell me how to convey to my parents that I'm not a child anymore.

OLD ENOUGH IN VIRGINIA

DEAR OLD ENOUGH: Your parents mean well, but children who are overprotected to the extent you have been often become stunted in their development. Teens do not learn social skills and how to make appropriate choices when they are "supervised" to the extent you are.

Tell your parents that you love them, but in three years you will be 18 and an adult. Explain that you know they love you, but if you are not allowed some freedom now, then you will be behind your peers because of your inexperience when you have reached an age when you'll be expected to make wise choices. Remind them that even children half your age are sufficiently coordinated that they can cut the food on their plates, and you would appreciate their allowing you to get some practice.

If this doesn't help them let go, then ask another adult to help you deliver the message.

DEAR ABBY: Two family members passed away, and because we live several states from our family, we were not informed of their deaths until many weeks after the funerals. Whose responsibility is it to notify us of a death in the family?

LEFT IN THE DARK

DEAR LEFT IN THE DARK: There is no designated person who makes the call. Often it is a family member conveying the sad news, or a close family friend if the family is too devastated or too busy making funeral arrangements to reach out. That you were not notified until weeks after the funeral—not once but twice—implies that there may have been some sort of estrangement. And if that's the case, you have my sympathy.

DEAR ABBY: An old friend from high school came to visit. While she was here I couldn't help but notice that her teeth and gums were in awful shape. Her gums were red and swollen, with dark plaque around the gum lines.

I feel terrible for her. I'd hate to see her lose her teeth. She's only 30, but it's clear she'll be in trouble if she doesn't see a dentist ASAP. How can I let her know that she really, really needs to do this?

CONCERNED IN L.A.

DEAR CONCERNED: Have a heart-to-heart talk with your friend and ask her why she hasn't been seeing a dentist. Tell her you are worried about her because diseases of the mouth can cause problems in other areas of the body or be a sign of illness.

If her problem is a fear of dentists, she should know that there are dentists who specialize in treating patients like her who can administer anti-anxiety meds to help her. And if her problem is money, that she should contact dental schools in her state to see if she could be treated as part of their supervised training for dental students. You are right to be concerned about your friend, so don't put off talking to her.

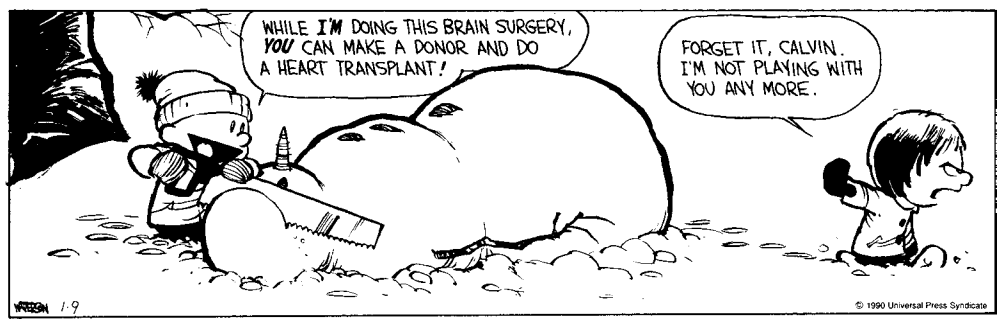
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $12 (U.S. funds)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


WHILE I'M DOING THIS BRAIN SURGERY, YOU CAN MAKE A DONOR AND DO A HEART TRANSPLANT!
FORGET IT, CALVIN. I'M NOT PLAYING WITH YOU ANY MORE.
WATTERSON 1-9
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Garfield®

By Jim Davis

DONUTS ARE BAD FOR YOU, YOU KNOW
AND I LOVE IT WHEN YOU'RE BAD
JIM DAVIS 1-9
www.garfield.com
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Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

HELLO, I'D LIKE TO RETURN THIS ITEM.
SURE. LET'S FILL OUT THE FORM. WAIT. THIS GIFT IS STILL WRAPPED.
YES.
OKAY... BUT WHY ARE YOU RETURNING IT WITHOUT SEEING WHAT'S INSIDE?
I DON'T HAVE TO. IT'S FROM MY UNCLE BURL. HE GETS ME THE SAME AWFUL GIFT EVERY YEAR.
WHAT IS IT?
A GIFT CARD TO THIS STORE.
!
www.gocomics.com
© 2010 Universal Uclick

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

NO! I WON'T GO TO THE VET.!!
YOU CAN'T MAKE ME GET A SHOT!!
DISTEMPER TANTRUM.
YOU CAN'T MAKE ME! YOU CAN'T MAKE ME!
www.gocomics.com
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1-9-10

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Go get
6 Makes skillfully
12 Mother —
13 Start a PC after a crash
14 Extremely tiny
15 Write cryptograms
16 Grate
17 On the rocks
19 Upper surface
20 Swedish furniture name
22 Coll.
24 Wanted poster abbr.
27 Emmets, e.g.
29 Hebrides island
32 Pale, sweet fruit
35 Verdi opera
36 Neighborhood
37 Parched
38 Greek vowel
40 Morays, e.g.
42 Bobby of hockey
44 Wagon
46 Onion's cousin
50 Even chance
52 South Dakota's capital
54 Think up
55 Conclusion
56 Recipient's antithesis
57 Beasts of burden

DOWN
1 Crumbly cheese
2 Bow-wielding god
3 Rates of speed
4 Marg Helgenberger series
5 Plantation house
6 Quebec tribe
7 Tears to bits
8 Regis and Kelly's network
9 Place to stand
10 Big bother
11 Dance lesson
12 Pitch
18 Food provider
21 Jay's follower
23 French letterhead abbr.
24 "Eureka!"
25 Japanese pond carp
26 Big name in fairy tales
28 Large, fragrant flower
30 Neither partner
31 Whatever amount
33 Corrode
34 — de mer
39 Less than 90 degrees
41 Coasters
42 Elevator name
43 Took the bus
45 Unoriginal one
47 One of HOMES
48 Sea flock
49 Frat party necessity
51 Blue
53 Office-holders

Solution time: 27 mins.

T	O	Y	■	F	I	L	M	■	W	I	F	E
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■	■	■	E	M	S	■	G	O	H	O	M	E
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I	R	E	S	■	G	O	D	■	S	I	T	E
N	E	D	■	W	A	X	■	O	P	T	E	D
G	O	O	V	E	R	■	A	T	E	■	■	■
■	■	■	I	D	A	■	S	I	C	K	L	E
F	L	E	X	■	G	O	T	O	S	E	E	D
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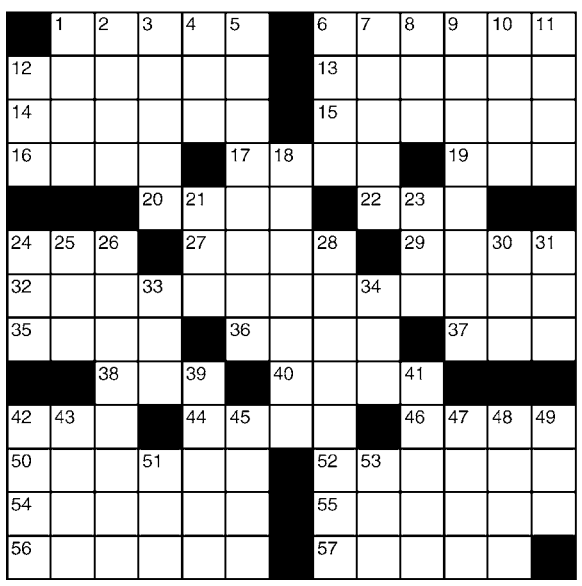
O	X	E	N	■	S	E	R	E	■	I	K	E

Yesterday's answer 1-9



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: A.J. McLean, 32; Dave Matthews, 43; Crystal Gayle, 59; Jimmy Page, 66

Happy Birthday: Take center stage and show everyone what you are capable of doing. You have always stretched yourself too far in the past and this time it's vital that you give your all to your own endeavors. Don't let someone's anger or complaints be your demise. This is your year to follow your heart and do your own thing. Your numbers are 8, 14, 19, 21, 28, 37, 44

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): You need a change of routine or scenery. Get out, join a group or get involved in a cause that moves you. Idle time is the enemy and will lead to anxious behavior and arguments with loved ones. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Negotiate your position within a group or partnership that needs to make some changes. Don't let little setbacks slow you down when it's important to move forward. Leave time for a romantic encounter late in the day. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): You can develop a skill you have and find someone interested in using what you have to offer. There is money to be made but only if you are relentless in your pursuit. Don't let anyone stifle your attempts to turn something you love to do into a lucrative pastime. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Don't leave anything to chance. You need to control the situation, not give in to someone else's demands. Step up and take over whether you like change or not. Love is on the rise. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Participate in whatever changes are taking place at home or at work. It's up to you to show your enthusiasm if you want to be counted as one of the team. Don't let someone take your place or push you aside when you are truly the better person to take the lead. ✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): You will have a good effect on the people you deal with and can help when it comes to serious decisions. Romance is in the picture and, with a couple of affectionate gestures, you can enhance your love life and make someone very happy. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Stay out of the line of fire. There will be plenty to disagree with but now is not the time. Avoid any interaction that may put you in a vulnerable position. Embrace change with optimism. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Put a little effort into your appeal. A short journey will lead to romance and change the course of your personal future. Get involved in activities that introduce you to inspirational people. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Take advantage of anyone offering to do things for you but don't be ungrateful. Your services will be welcomed and will lead to an interesting financial partnership. It's sharing with others that will advance your own dreams. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): If there are offers on the table, you should be considering one of them seriously. A change in your current direction will lead to an unusual source of income. A commitment to someone you care for will ensure you are on the same page. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Put your emotions on the backburner for now. You have to deal with each issue as it arises or you will get bogged down. Don't let anyone convince you that you can bypass the inevitable. ✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Love and romance are in a high cycle and will help make this day very special. Do something nice for someone you love and the response will be overwhelming. There is a gift or reward heading your way. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are determined and relentless. You are strong-willed, confident and are not afraid to follow an obscure path.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

				6				
	2	3		4		9	7	
			2		5			
		9				5		
8	7			5			2	6
		1				8		
			4		9			
	1	5		7		3	4	
				3				

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 1/09

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

1	6	9	4	7	8	3	5	2
2	7	8	3	5	6	9	1	4
3	5	4	9	1	2	8	6	7
6	4	3	1	2	7	5	9	8
7	8	1	5	3	9	4	2	6
9	2	5	6	8	4	7	3	1
8	9	7	2	6	3	1	4	5
4	1	2	7	9	5	6	8	3
5	3	6	8	4	1	2	7	9

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 1/08

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

SPACE TOURISM **Solution: 7 letters**

W	A	L	K	I	N	G	H	C	R	A	E	S	E	R
Y	E	D	(R)	I	N	E	T	A	V	I	R	P	S	E
C	A	I	E	(I)	N	M	S	L	E	T	O	H	S	S
A	L	R	G	K	(D)	V	A	O	N	R	U	T	R	E
C	T	R	U	H	O	(E)	E	E	T	T	M	E	A	R
O	I	E	L	S	T	O	S	S	T	I	G	K	T	V
V	T	V	A	E	S	L	B	L	T	N	T	R	S	A
D	U	O	T	S	O	I	E	R	E	M	I	A	E	T
A	D	L	E	I	S	W	A	S	E	R	E	M	A	I
G	E	V	D	U	O	S	S	N	S	V	U	N	T	O
E	E	E	D	R	E	A	M	O	O	N	O	T	T	N
N	P	I	T	C	P	T	N	E	C	S	E	D	U	S
C	S	H	C	N	U	A	L	O	Q	U	E	S	T	F
Y	N	O	S	N	A	R	B	U	S	I	N	E	S	S
N	P	L	E	A	S	U	R	E	I	T	N	O	R	F

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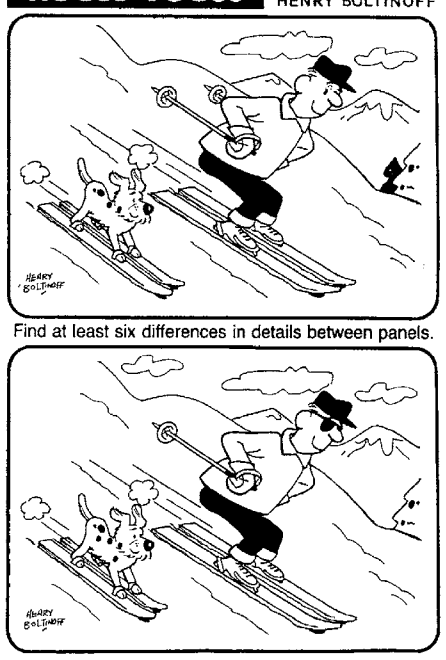
Advocacy, Agency, Altitude, Branson, Business, Cruise, Descent, Dream, Frontier, Future, Hotels, Investments, Launch, Market, Moon, Olsen, Overbooked, Passengers, Pleasure, Ports, Private, Quest, Regulated, Research, Reservations, Revolve, Ride, Russian, Seat, Shuttleworth, Speed, Stars, Team, Tito, Virgin, Walking, Weightlessness

Yesterday's Answer: Sensors

Just in time for gift-giving: **Treasury 8** can be ordered by sending check or money order for $10.95 each plus $3.25 postage and handling each ($14.20 total each, U.S. funds only) for the first volume, $1.50 p&h for each additional volume, to Universal Uclick, Attn: Wonderword, 1130 Walnut St., Kansas City, Mo. 64106 or call toll-free, 1-800-642-6480. Order online at upuzzles.com.

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

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Differences: 1. Tree is missing. 2. Man has sunglasses. 3. One ski pole is missing. 4. Dog has more spots. 5. Cloud has been added. 6. Dog's skis are shorter.

Wishing Well®

8	6	2	3	5	6	5	4	7	5	8	5	6
P	Y	H	B	A	O	D	N	U	A	L	Y	U
2	7	6	3	2	8	5	3	2	8	2	5	8
A	N	A	E	V	A	T	D	E	N	A	O	Y
4	6	2	5	8	4	7	8	5	3	2	8	5
E	I	P	R	O	W	I	U	E	E	U	R	M
8	6	8	7	3	4	5	3	7	6	4	7	4
F	D	U	O	T	R	E	E	N	E	E	O	P
5	2	7	5	6	7	2	3	6	5	7	4	7
M	R	F	B	L	I	P	R	D	E	D	L	E
5	3	4	7	6	7	4	8	3	4	2	8	3
R	M	A	A	E	S	C	T	I	E	O	U	N
4	6	8	3	8	3	4	2	4	6	2	6	4
S	R	R	E	E	D	O	S	L	L	E	Y	D

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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Super Crossword

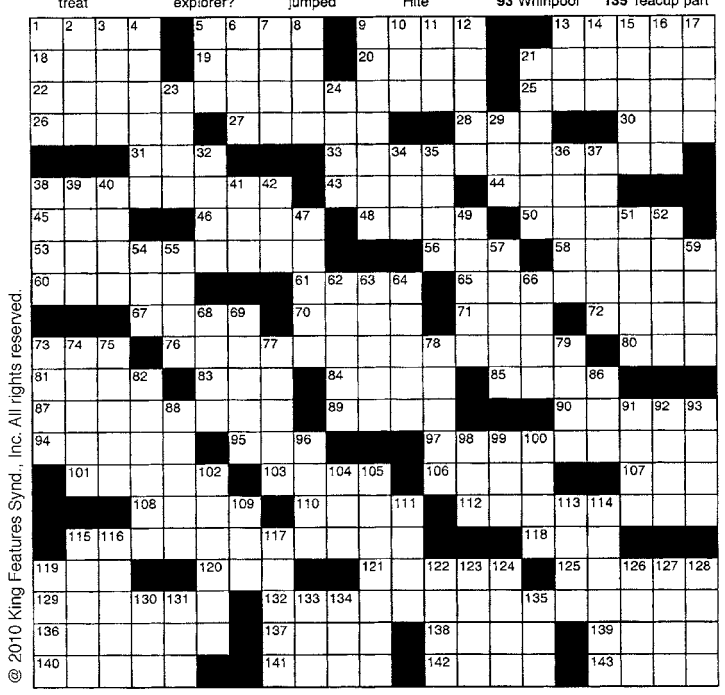
THEY'RE DRIVEN

ACROSS

1 Din from dynamite
5 Iceberg kin
9 Exclude
13 Platonic character
18 South Seas novel
19 Steber solo
20 Iago or Othello
21 Alligator relative
22 Driven President?
25 Procure
26 "Rawhide" rope
27 Muslim deity
28 Select, with "for"
30 Pig — poke
31 Fluffy female
33 Driven novelist?
38 Might
43 Art deco designer
44 Caution
45 Rush
46 Son of Zeus
48 Big man on campus
50 Paris' pop
53 Driven humorist?
56 Shorten a skirt
58 Aquatic mammal
60 Trattoria treat
61 "L'—, c'est moi"
65 Longfellow subject
67 "Carmina Burana" composer
70 Take the tube
71 "Kidnapped" monogram
72 Prepares to dine
73 Part of EST
76 Driven actress?
80 Mushroom part
81 Meat cut
83 Thompson or Salonga
84 — breve
85 Barbecue
87 Pangolin, for one
89 Slender
90 Heel type
94 Mideastern pockets
95 Smidgen
97 Driven actor?
101 Terra —
103 Lauder powder
106 Garment feature
107 Accomplished
108 Time to evolve?
110 Valuable
112 Rite
115 Driven explorer?
118 Be in debt
119 "— Nidre"
120 Pallid
121 Victorian wit
125 At attention
129 Sheik spot
132 Driven rock star?
136 Real thing
137 Actress Skye
138 — mater
139 King or Satie
140 Gibbons of "Entertainment Tonight"
141 Rocker Rundgren
142 Parent
143 Dressing gown

DOWN

1 Piglet's papa
2 Prefix meaning "both"
3 Author Ephron
4 Mitch Miller's trademark
5 Remark from 31 Across
6 Role for Shirley
7 "Show Boat" song
8 It's often jumped
9 Chekhov's "The Cherry —"
10 — juice
11 Springfield's st.
12 Caruso or Corelli
13 Use a shuttle
14 Thwack
15 Monitor message
16 Contaminate
17 Moffo of the Met
21 Afternoon refresher
23 "Cactus Flower" star
24 Christen
29 Basilica bench
32 Richard of "Love Me Tender"
34 Hwy.
35 Beatles refrain
36 Cupid's missile
37 Legendary Colt Johnny
38 Have a ball at the mall
39 Buster Brown's dog
40 Some wines
41 Singing syllable
42 "— a Rebel" ('62 hit)
47 Sociologist Hite
49 Indira Gandhi's father
51 Tall story?
52 Maestro Zubin
54 Ike's domain
55 "Cheers" patron
57 Jazzman Davis
59 Kind of file
62 — wave
63 Mr. Rochester's ward
64 Electrical inventor
66 '68 US Open winner
68 Fedora fabric
69 Cut loose
73 Blow for a bounder
74 Pick-me-up
75 "Same here!"
77 Jeweler's weight
78 All legs
79 Suburban obsession
82 Tidy up
86 Ring counter
88 Philanthropist Brooke
91 Extinct bird
92 Prepare to bear it
93 Whirlpool
96 Poet in the past
98 Rapper Tone —
99 Scrape by, with "out"
100 Pianist Peter
102 Regardless
104 — Cruces, NM
105 Dense
109 — Na Na
111 Oklahoma city
113 Kind of pitcher
114 Lyricist Johnny
115 Mezzo Marilyn
116 Make one's day
117 Incompetent
119 Film critic Pauline
122 Inventive sort?
123 Take-out order?
124 Austen's Miss Woodhouse
126 Continental currency
127 Farm structure
128 Little guy
130 Show —
131 "Make — double!"
133 Milne creature
134 Remnant
135 Teacup part



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Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

1. U.S. STATES: What state lies directly north of Wyoming?
2. LITERATURE: Who was Sherlock Holmes' archenemy?
3. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What is the traditional birthstone for April?
4. PSYCHOLOGY: What is the fear represented by "monophobia"?
5. MUSIC: What 1990s rock band had a hit album titled "Nevermind"?
6. GEOGRAPHY: What is the longest suspension bridge in the United States?
7. FAMOUS QUOTATIONS: Who once said, "You can observe a lot by just watching"?
8. MOVIES: Who won the Oscar for best actress in 1978?
9. TELEVISION: What was the name of Ross' monkey on the TV show "Friends"?
10. SCIENCE: What is the symbol for the element phosphorus?

Answers

1. Montana
2. Professor James Moriarty
3. Diamond
4. Fear of being alone
5. Nirvana
6. Verrazano-Narrows in New York (4,260 feet)
7. Yogi Berra
8. Jane Fonda ("Coming Home")
9. Marcel
10. P

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Saturday's Answers

POPEYE
HEY SUSSMAN
ARE YA GONNA ORDER ?
IN A MOMENT
AS SOON AS I FINISH THIS LIST!
WOTCHA WRITIN' ?
MY NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS!
MY DOCTOR TOLD ME I HAD TO CUT DOWN ON MY FOOD...
I'M TAKING HIS ADVICE...
...THIS IS MY LIST!
" I RESOLVE TO ELIMINATE TOFU, QUINOA, TURNIPS, BULGUR, KALE AND BRUSSELS SPROUTS FROM MY DIET "
THA'S A TOUGH LIST...ARE YA SURE YA KIN STICK TO IT?
YOU'D BE AMAZED AT MY WILL-POWER!
HEY SUSSMAN
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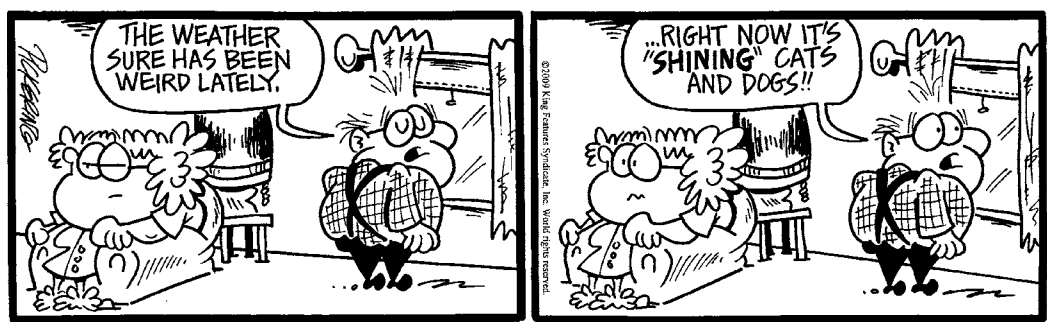
Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps

THAT THERE IS GRANDPA'S OLD ARMY HELMET.
...AND THESE ARE MY ARMY FATIGUES I WORE IN KOREA.
MOM SAYS YOU WENT TO WAR SO I WON'T HAVE TO.
I SURE DID, ALTHOUGH THAT'S ALSO WHAT MY GRANDPA TOLD ME. LET'S HOPE IT WORKS THIS TIME.
ME TOO.

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering


THE WEATHER SURE HAS BEEN WEIRD LATELY.
...RIGHT NOW IT'S "SHINING" CATS AND DOGS!!
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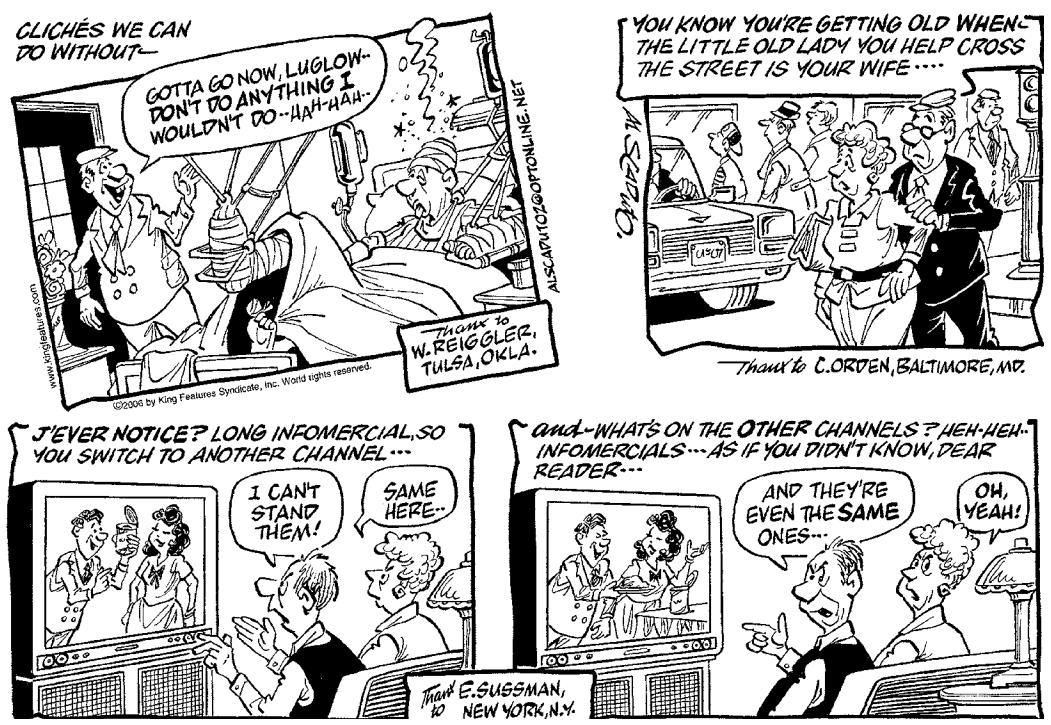
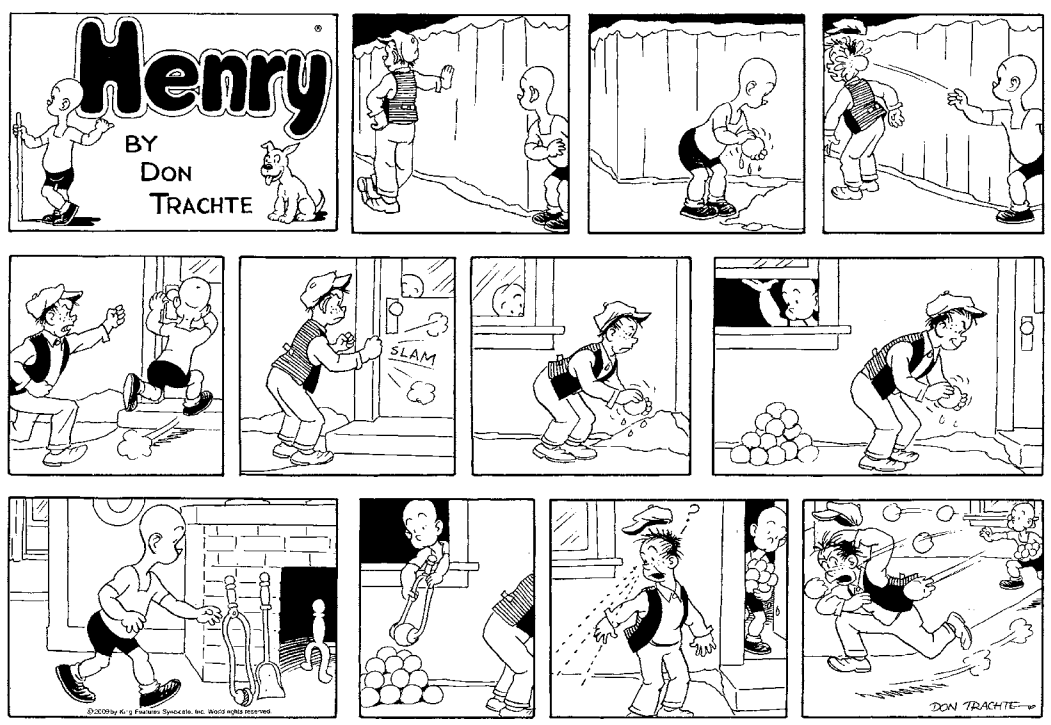
They'll Do It Every Time

by Al Scaduto


CLICHÉS WE CAN DO WITHOUT—
GOTTA GO NOW, LUGLOW.. DON'T DO ANYTHING I WOULDN'T DO..HAH-HAH..
Thanx to W. REIGGLER, TULSA, OKLA.
©2006 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.
YOU KNOW YOU'RE GETTING OLD WHEN THE LITTLE OLD LADY YOU HELP CROSS THE STREET IS YOUR WIFE....
Thanx to C. ORDEN, BALTIMORE, MD.
J'EVER NOTICE? LONG INFOMERCIAL, SO YOU SWITCH TO ANOTHER CHANNEL...
I CAN'T STAND THEM!
SAME HERE..
and-WHAT'S ON THE OTHER CHANNELS? HEH-HEH.. INFOMERCIALS...AS IF YOU DIDN'T KNOW, DEAR READER...
AND THEY'RE EVEN THE SAME ONES...
OH, YEAH!
Thanx to E. SUSSMAN, NEW YORK, N.Y.

Henry

BY DON TRACHTE



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ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	**$25**
• 5-Liner	**$35**
• 3-Liner with picture	**$45**
• 5-Liner with picture	**$55**

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Classified Ads

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- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

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Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

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Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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For $230.00 / month
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Fina Sisu Apt., 2-BR, 1-BTH, FF, AC, BU Genset/ 24-hr water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample parking. Right behind NMC campus. MIHA applicants accepted. Special rates for NMC faculty/ students. Call 235-6527/8 or 285-1317 for info.

WHATZIT Solution: Back of the beyond

WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

beyond

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Find today's solution in this section

Saipan Tribune
Sports
There's nothing Super about the Pittsburgh Steelers anymore.
28 SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2009
25
Angamwas rules 4-person
Tribune
FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
TUESDAY DECEMBER 15, 2009
Fitial eyes Cepeda's re-appointment to NMC board. PAG
DPH to ask for extension of emergency declaration. PAG
$1.35M earmarks for NMI now up for Obama's
By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
Fitial: Ombudsman shouldn't accommodate 'overstayers'
10 DAYS to go before Christmas
OPINION METER
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Knicks hit 6 3s in 4th quarter to edge Bobcats

NEW YORK (AP)—Chris Duhon made the tiebreaking 3-pointer with 2:03 left, Danilo Gallinari followed with two more, and the New York Knicks pulled out a 97-93 victory over the Charlotte Bobcats on Thursday night.

Wilson Chandler scored a season-high 27 points to lead the Knicks, who hit six 3-pointers in the final quarter and 12 overall. They also got a huge break when video review of Stephen Jackson's long jumper agreed with the officials' ruling of a 2-pointer, instead of a 3 that would have tied it with 1:43 to go.

David Lee had 22 points, and Gallinari finished with 17 for the Knicks, who have won three straight and 11 of 16.

Jackson scored 26 points, and reserve Flip Murray 20 for the Bobcats, who had their three-game winning streak snapped.

New York couldn't get its offense going against the team that allows the fewest points in the league the way it did Sunday against Indiana, when it rang up the biggest rout in the NBA this season with a 132-89 victory.

But the Knicks shot 53 percent from the field and rebounded from an awful start to the second half to split the four-game season series with the Bobcats, potentially an important tiebreaker if the teams finish with the same record.

Neither team scored for nearly 4 1/2 minutes until Lee's basket extended New York's lead to 84-78 with 3:32 remaining. The Bobcats tied it up on 3-pointers by Jackson and Raymond Felton, but Duhon snapped it with a 3 from straightaway with 2:03 left.

Jackson's jumper cut it to one, then Gallinari—the NBA leader in 3-pointers made—hit back-to-back for a 93-86 lead with 44 seconds to play.

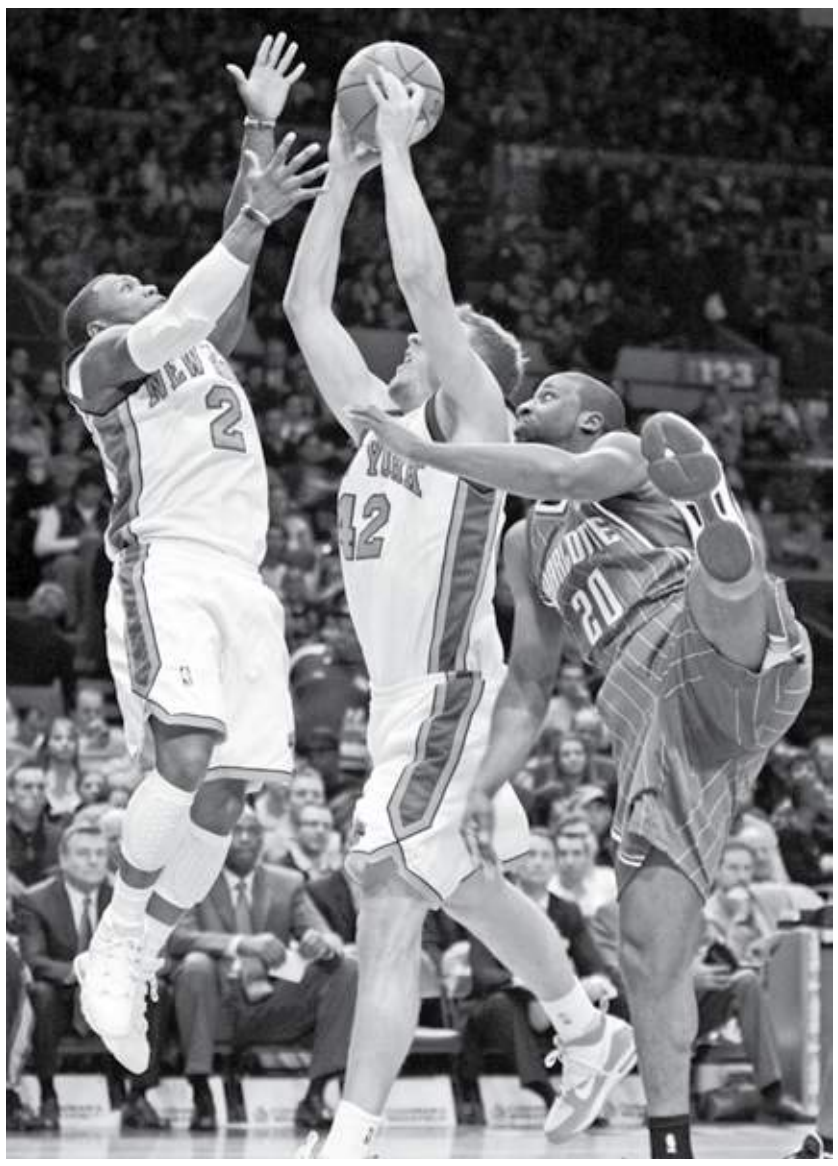
Five straight points by Murray trimmed it to two with 13 seconds to play, but Chandler sank a pair of free throws and Charlotte couldn't score again.

Both teams have been playing well after poor starts. Charlotte is tied for seventh in the Eastern Conference, while New York is just a half-game back in a tie for ninth.

Charlotte trailed by five at halftime but scored the first seven points of the third quarter, helped by a pair of Knicks turnovers, to go ahead 51-49 on Boris Diaw's jumper. Diaw and Jackson opened and closed a 12-4 spurt later in the period that gave the Bobcats a 10-point lead with 2:23 remaining.

Nate Robinson made a 3-pointer that cut it to 71-68 after three, then began the fourth with a dunk, followed by another 3 that put the Knicks back into the lead in the opening minute. New York held Charlotte to just three field goals in the first 8 1/2 minutes of the period.

Chandler scored 10 points in the first quarter, and the Knicks shot 59 percent in taking a 28-22 lead. The Bobcats led for much of the second before New York scored the final six points, capped by Lee's dunk, to grab a 49-44 halftime advantage.



AP

With Knicks guard Nate Robinson (2) assisting, New York Knicks center David Lee (42) beats out Charlotte Bobcats guard Raymond Felton (20) as he pulls down a rebound in the second quarter of the Knicks' 97-93 victory over the Charlotte Bobcats in an NBA basketball game at Madison Square Garden in New York, Thursday, Jan. 7, 2010.

Rafer Alston signs with Heat for rest of season

MIAMI (AP)—Rafer Alston got his wish, signing with the Miami Heat for the remainder of the season and getting the chance to play alongside Dwyane Wade again.

The 33-year-old point guard cleared waivers at 6 p.m. Thursday, and the Heat announced the signing about an hour later. Alston will be with the team when it opens a six-game road trip Friday in Phoenix.

Alston, who started all 23 playoff games with Orlando last season when the Magic reached the NBA finals, played with the Heat in 2003-04—Wade's rookie season. Alston's contract with the New Jersey Nets was bought out Tuesday, and he made it clear right away that Miami was atop his list of teams to join.

"I just met with him and he said he's in great shape," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said by telephone from Phoenix Thursday night. "He's a worker. We're excited about it. We always felt Rafer was a Miami Heat player. ... But more than anything, the fact that his game fits our philosophy and that he's been with us before and buys into it and loved his time here and wanted to be here, it made it a great fit."

Alston, who has been an outstanding on-the-ball defender, could play Friday against the Suns. Spoelstra hasn't made a final decision.

Alston started 13 of New Jersey's first 15 games this season—part of the Nets' abysmal 0-18 start. He's shooting only 34 percent this season, well below his career average of 38.5 percent, and was averaging only 9.7 points.

A change of scenery could do him wonders.

"We are thrilled to have Skip back in a Heat uniform, as he brings another set of skills and experience to the point guard position," Heat president Pat Riley said in a statement. "From his time in Miami, we know both his game and him as a person, and we had a great experience with him in the past. We are very happy to have Skip back in the Heat family."

The signing comes at a crucial point of Miami's season. No team played fewer road games in the season's first 72 days than Miami, which is 11-10 at home, but just 6-6 on the road and sitting in fifth place in the East.

The Heat are about to start making up for all those early home dates.

On Friday, they begin a stretch where 20 of their next 27 games will be on the road, no homestand of longer than two games until the first week of March.

"We just have to continue to grow as a team and continue to learn from our mistakes," Wade said.

Adding another veteran won't hurt in that regard.

The Heat had only two point guards on the roster after trading Chris Quinn on Tuesday to New Jersey—a deal the Nets made almost at the same time they were buying out Alston's contract.

Alston helped Miami close the 2003-04 season with 17 wins in its final 21 games, getting the Heat the No. 4 seed in the Eastern Conference that year, and becoming a close friend and adviser to Wade along the way.

"Veteran guys are so important in this league," Wade said. "They've done it for so long and Skip became a leader. He's a general on the floor, really helps to lead his team."

Spoelstra said it won't take Alston long to get up to speed, especially since Miami's defensive system is "similar enough" to what he knew with the Heat.

Miami now has an unusual situation at the point, with three players at the position who have all started at least 11 games this season. Carlos Arroyo took over Miami's starting job in mid-December from Mario Chalmers, who started every game last year as a rookie for the Heat.

"It's definitely a positive for us at one of the most important positions on the floor," Spoelstra said. "Now we have great depth and all three of them are very professional. Does that mean it's going to be easy? No, probably not for whomever is going to be the third guard. But I think everybody's heart is in the right place. We'll see how it plays out."

NBA BRIEFS

Pacers' Granger nears return from heel injury

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Indiana Pacers forward Danny Granger, an All-Star last season, expects to play soon after missing the past month because of an injured heel. His return date is uncertain, but he practiced on Wednesday and Thursday with no pain. "I think I'm very, very close to playing," he said after Thursday's practice. "It's just a matter of everybody, the coaches and the training staff, all giving me the OK to go forward." Granger won't play Friday at Minnesota or Saturday at Oklahoma City. "He's out this weekend," Pacers coach Jim O'Brien said. "He's not going to play this week. The step that he's at right now, he's practicing with the idea of getting him into game shape. It's different than running on the treadmill or in the pool. You've got to get out there and play 5-on-5." Granger won the NBA's Most Improved Player award last season. He averaged 25.8 points per game, trailing only Dwyane Wade, LeBron James, Kobe Bryant and Dirk Nowitzki.

All bets are off: Nets ban gambling on team plane

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP)—All bets are off on the New Jersey Nets' team plane. A team spokesman confirms the Nets have decided to ban gambling on their flights, not long after it apparently led to the locker room incident involving Gilbert Arenas and his guns. The ban was first reported by The New York Times, which said players were informed Wednesday. Team president Rod Thorn told the newspaper that the Nets have never had a problem with gambling, but "obviously, you can see what can happen." An official who has been briefed on the investigation into the incident in Washington told The Associated Press the dispute between Arenas and Javaris Crittenton began during a card game on the team's flight home from a West Coast trip on Dec. 19.

Official: Wizards plan fines over Arenas antics

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Washington Wizards plan to fine some players for participating in Gilbert Arenas' on-court antics that made light of his gun troubles, an NBA official said Thursday.

The official told The Associated Press that the team is reviewing details from the Tuesday night game at Philadelphia before determining who will be fined and how much. The official has direct knowledge of the team's plans and spoke on condition of anonymity because the review was still ongoing.

Before the game, Arenas was surrounded by his teammates when he knelt on the court and pointed his index fingers at them, as if he were firing guns. A photograph shows nearly all the players laughing or smiling.

The official said the fines would be contingent in part on whether Arenas and his teammates planned it ahead of time.

Arenas was suspended indefinitely without pay by the NBA on Wednesday for bringing guns to the Verizon Center and related incidents, including a locker room spat with teammate Javaris Crittenton that involved firearms. Commissioner David Stern was particularly upset that Arenas joked about it, adding that the player was "not currently fit to take the court."

The Wizards also rebuked Arenas and the players who found his behavior "amusing," saying their actions were "unacceptable." The team is owned by the family of the late Abe Pollin, who changed the team's name from Bullets because of the violent connotation. The Wizards have told Arenas to stay away from games, practices and other team functions.

Arenas is also under investigation by federal and local authorities for possible violations of the strict gun laws in the nation's capital, and evidence is being presented to a grand jury. Because the Verizon Center in a designated "gun free zone"—within 1,000 feet of a day care center—Arenas would be subject to twice the fine or jail sentence if he is convicted.

Also Thursday, a huge Arenas banner was removed from the side of the Verizon Center by order of the team. Several stories tall, the banner featured Arenas dribbling a ball, staring straight ahead, with the team slogan "Character, Commitment, Connection" superimposed on his image.

Likewise put to rest was Gilbert Arenas' Twitter account, which he often used to poke fun at his own plight after news of the confrontation with Crittenton first broke on New Year's Day. Arenas once boasted of a goal to accumulate a million followers, but his page had been erased as of late Thursday.

PGA Tour season gets under way in Hawaii

SBS CHAMPIONSHIP

KAPALUA, Hawaii (AP)—U.S. Open champion Lucas Glover returned to Kapalua and had another miserable start to the first round of a new PGA Tour season. The difference Thursday was how he finished.

Glover recovered from a double bogey on his opening hole by going 9-under par over a nine-hole stretch in the middle of his round. He finished it off with a tap-in birdie for a 7-under 66 on Thursday and a one-shot lead in the season-opening SBS Championship.

The last time he qualified for this winners-only tournament, Glover began his season with four straight bogeys. This time, he hit a weak 4-iron that disappeared into the native shrubs and led to a double bogey.

"I was aiming 25 feet left of the hole and hit it 25 feet to the right," he said. "I got what I deserved."

He made up for it in a big way.

Glover, who made only two eagles in 26 tournaments last year, made two in a five-hole stretch on the Plantation Course at Kapalua that turned his fortunes quickly. He then made four straight birdies to open the back nine, and took the outright lead with a pitch from just short of the 18th green that trickled to inside a foot from the cup.

Nathan Green of Australia and Martin Laird of Scotland, among seven players making their debuts at Kapalua, joined Dustin Johnson and Nick Watney at 67. British Open champion Stewart Cink and Masters champion Angel Cabrera were among those at 68.

Defending champion Geoff Ogilvy had a 69.

The wind finally switched to its normal direction—the trades—and it was mild enough to make scoring relatively easy.

AP

Lucas Glover holds up his ball after making a birdie putt on the 18th green during the first round of the SBS Championship golf tournament in Kapalua, Hawaii, Thursday, Jan. 7, 2010.

Mark Wilson (74) and Heath Slocum (75) were the only players over par in the 28-man field.

The key to Glover's success last year, when he won the U.S. Open at Bethpage Black, was to not be so hard on himself. He was tested immediately with his double bogey, and it didn't bother him in the least.

"I knew there were a lot of birdies," he said. "I saw some scores early and I knew guys were making birdies, and if I played well, I could get something going. So just don't rush anything. Be patient."

The birdies and eagles came quickly.

It started with a 6-iron to the par-5 fifth to 18 feet for eagle, followed by a drive down the hill to the front of the sixth green for a simple up-and-down for birdie. Then came a 3-wood into 30 feet on the par-5 ninth, and the longest putt of his round, a 35-footer across the 11th green for a birdie.

And it could have been even better.

His birdie streak on the back nine ended at the 14th, where he drove to the front of the green. He chipped weakly to 8 feet and missed the putt. On the next hole, Glover missed a 3-foot birdie putt, and he three-putted from about 15 feet above the hole on the 16th.

It still added to a 66, and Glover felt as though he played that well.

Otherwise, it was a typical start to another PGA Tour season, even as questions linger about Tiger Woods and when he will return from the crisis in his personal life that has put golf in the mainstream media for reasons few ever imagined.

Some players felt rusty, while just about everyone was optimistic about a new year.

Green felt particularly good after his worst shot of the day. He hit it left of the green on the par-3 eighth and tried to play it from the weeds, but the thick grass grabbed the hosel of the club and pulled it straight to the left. Green feared it was going to take the head off a woman, one of about 10 people in his gallery, but it hit her in the arm.

"I actually said, 'Sorry,' while the ball was still on the club face," Green said.

From some 30 yards beyond the green, he chipped to 6 feet and got out of there with a bogey.

"That's the stuff I wasn't doing much at all last year," Green said. "If I had a slightly good break like that, I wouldn't make the most of it. I wouldn't manage to get it up and down."

He settled down after that with four birdies on the back nine.

Johnson had eight birdies to offset a few mistakes, which are expected this time of the year. Laird had the honor of hitting the opening tee shot of the 2010 season, and he split the middle of the fairway, which isn't hard to do since it's about 80 yards wide.

Watney played with Johnson, and both kept it pretty simple.

"It was just really—I hate saying it—an easy day out here," Watney said.

Holliday, Cards finalize $120M, 7-year deal

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Matt Holliday hopes to be teammates with Albert Pujols for a long time.

"I think he's going to be here at least two more years and hopefully forever," Holliday said Thursday after finalizing his $120 million, seven-year contract with the St. Louis Cardinals. "Hopefully, he'll be here for the rest of his career and we can do some damage."

Coming off his third NL MVP award, Pujols is entering the final guaranteed season of a $100 million, seven-year contract that includes a $16 million team option for 2011.

Chairman Bill DeWitt said there have been no negotiations on an extension for Pujols, who told the team recently to take care of more pressing matters.

"We haven't started those discussions yet, other than informally to let him know we're interested," DeWitt said. "We've got time, with two years and spring training a bit away."

Holliday, who held up his new No. 7 jersey (he wore No. 15 with the Cardinals last season), said he hadn't had much contact with Pujols aside from exchanging text messages of encouragement.

Holliday is looking forward to working with batting instructor Mark McGwire and manager Tony La Russa.

Holliday and McGwire hit together last offseason when both were living in California and said the two were "good friends."

"I'm excited to see how he does as a hitting coach," Holliday said. "I think he'll do great. He's a very good communicator and I think people are very interested to see what he has to say."

McGwire, hired in October to be the Cardinals hitting coach, still hasn't held his introductory news conference.

"We're working towards something," said general manager John Mozeliak, who didn't anticipate it would happen soon.

Holliday has no worries that the 65-year-old La Russa, who signed a one-year extension in October, is close to retirement.

"I trust if we're playing well, Tony is going to manage," Holliday said. "I don't see him quitting anytime soon, but I could be wrong. If we win a World Series, I think he'll be back."

Holliday, Pujols and pitcher Chris Carpenter will combine to make $47.5 million next season, including $7 million in salary that will be deferred without interest. DeWitt expects the Cardinals payroll, which was $102.7 million last year, will remain about the same.

"You don't want all young players because you want to be competitive and you don't want all mature players because you can't really afford them," DeWitt said. "It's the blend that makes it work, and I think we have that blend."

Pitcher Adam Wainwright, who won 19 games last season, said he hopes the combined salaries of Holliday and Pujols do not make it financially difficult for the Cardinals to keep him in a few years.

"I fully intend to pitch at a level that requires my pay to go up," Wainwright said. "I hope the Cardinals can keep me as long as they can."

It's unclear whether the Cardinals will try to sign free-agent third baseman Miguel Tejada, who might be too expensive. Mozeliak wouldn't discuss Tejada after Holliday's news conference.

Holliday's deal was finalized two days after the two sides reached a preliminary agreement that was subject to a physical.

Dealt to the Cardinals from Oakland in July, Holliday hit .353 with 13 homers and 55 RBIs in 63 games for St. Louis. Holliday, who turns 30 on Jan. 15, helped propel the team to the NL Central title while batting cleanup behind Pujols.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	25	8	.758	—
Toronto	18	18	.500	8 1/2
New York	15	20	.429	11
Philadelphia	10	24	.294	15 1/2
New Jersey	3	32	.086	23

Southeast Division

Orlando	24	11	.686	—
Atlanta	22	12	.647	1 1/2
Miami	17	16	.515	6
Charlotte	15	19	.441	8 1/2
Washington	11	22	.333	12

Central Division

Cleveland	28	9	.757	—
Milwaukee	14	18	.438	11 1/2
Chicago	14	19	.424	12
Detroit	11	23	.324	15 1/2
Indiana	11	23	.324	15 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Dallas	24	11	.686	—
San Antonio	21	12	.636	2
Houston	20	16	.556	4 1/2
New Orleans	17	16	.515	6
Memphis	17	17	.500	6 1/2

Northwest Division

Denver	22	13	.629	—
Portland	22	15	.595	1
Oklahoma City	19	16	.543	3
Utah	19	16	.543	3
Minnesota	7	29	.194	15 1/2

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	28	7	.800	—
Phoenix	23	13	.639	5 1/2
L.A. Clippers	16	18	.471	11 1/2
Sacramento	14	20	.412	13 1/2
Golden State	10	24	.294	17 1/2

Yesterday's Game
New York 97, Charlotte 93

SBS CHAMPIONSHIP SCORES

KAPALUA, Hawaii (AP)–Scores Thursday from the SBS Championship, a $5.6 million US PGA Tour winners-only event at 7,411-yard, par-73 (36-37) Plantation Course at Kapalua:

FIRST ROUND

Lucas Glover	33-33—66
Martin Laird	34-33—67
Nathan Green	34-33—67
Matt Kuchar	32-35—67
Nick Watney	33-34—67
Dustin Johnson	34-33—67
John Rollins	33-35—68
Stewart Cink	35-33—68
Angel Cabrera	33-35—68
Sean O'Hair	35-33—68
Ryan Moore	35-34—69
Jerry Kelly	35-34—69
Geoff Ogilvy	34-35—69
Paul Casey	35-35—70
Rory Sabbatini	34-36—70
Y.E. Yang	34-36—70
Retief Goosen	35-35—70
Kenny Perry	33-37—70
Stephen Ames	37-34—71
Pat Perez	36-35—71
Bo Van Pelt	34-38—72
Brian Gay	37-35—72
Zach Johnson	34-38—72
Michael Bradley	36-37—73
Troy Matteson	38-35—73
Steve Stricker	38-35—73
Mark Wilson	40-34—74
Heath Slocum	38-37—75

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOCAL SCORES

PILCOWA STANDINGS

Open

Diamond	6	1
Noni Saipan	5	3
IT&E	4	3
Saipan Fresh	3	4
NCIC	0	7

Masters

Ebisuya	6	2
University of Loyola	5	3
Wushin	3	5
GEC	3	4
Cool Water	2	5

Crucial win for Wushin; Noni routs NCIC

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Wushin Corp. notched an important victory over University of Loyola, 97-89, on Thursday night at the JP Centre Basketball Court, boosting the former's playoffs chances in the 2009 PILCOWA Basketball League.

Wushin finished the double-round regular season with a 3-5 record, a win ahead of Cool Water (2-5). Wushin, Cool Water, and GEC Pawnshop are fighting for the last two slots in the playoffs. Despite the loss, Loyola (5-3) is already assured of a ticket to the next round, joining another early qualifier Ebisuya (6-2).

There is only one game left in the regular season in the masters division and the result of the match between GEC Pawnshop and Cool Water tonight will determine which two teams will advance to the next round.

A Cool Water loss will give GEC and Wushin slots to the playoffs. A Cool Water victory will create a three-way tie. In this case, Cool Water must prevail by more than six points against GEC to claim the third playoffs seat and leave Wushin and the latter to dispute the last playoffs seat. If Cool Waters wins by less than six points, the team with the highest points in the quotient system will take the third spot and the lowest two will square off for the last playoffs berth.

Wushin almost dropped its last game when Loyola cut the lead to two, 89-91, with 54 seconds left on the clock. Jinang canned his first free throw and after missing his second charity, Melvin Villarin grabbed the offensive rebound and made a putback.

Loyola gave up a foul in the ensuing play and Jojo Garon muffed both charities. There was a battle for the loose ball and GEC kept the leather after Danny Bicera touched the ball last before going out to the baseline.

Danny Dayrit inbounded the ball and made a bounced pass to a cutting Ferdie Tobias in the paint. Tobias nailed the basket and drew a foul from Miko Moran, but missed the bonus free throw, giving Wushin only a four-point lead, 93-89.

Wushin then regained possession when Villarin was called for a dribbling violation and the eventual winning team wisely melted the clock en route to an eight-point victory.

In the second game, Noni Saipan whipped New City International Construction, 97-72.

The win improved Noni's record to 5-3, giving the squad the second spot in the team standings behind the league-leading Diamond Ali'i (6-1).

NCIC kept pace with Noni only in the first period when the latter led by only seven, 24-17. In the second period, Noni began to assert its might, capitalizing on its much deeper bench to take a double-digit lead at the break, 44-30.

Noni continued to dominate NCIC in the second half and had six of its eight players finishing in double figures en route to a 23-point win.

First Game

Wushin 97 – Garon 20, Carino 18, Trajano 18, Tobias 10, Dayrit 10, S. Ebuen 5, Lansang 4, O. Ebuen 1.

University of Loyola 89 – Villarin 27, Tabora 18, Abuy 16, Bicera 11, Jinang 6, Pineda 6, De La Torre 3, Puri 2, Manalili 2.

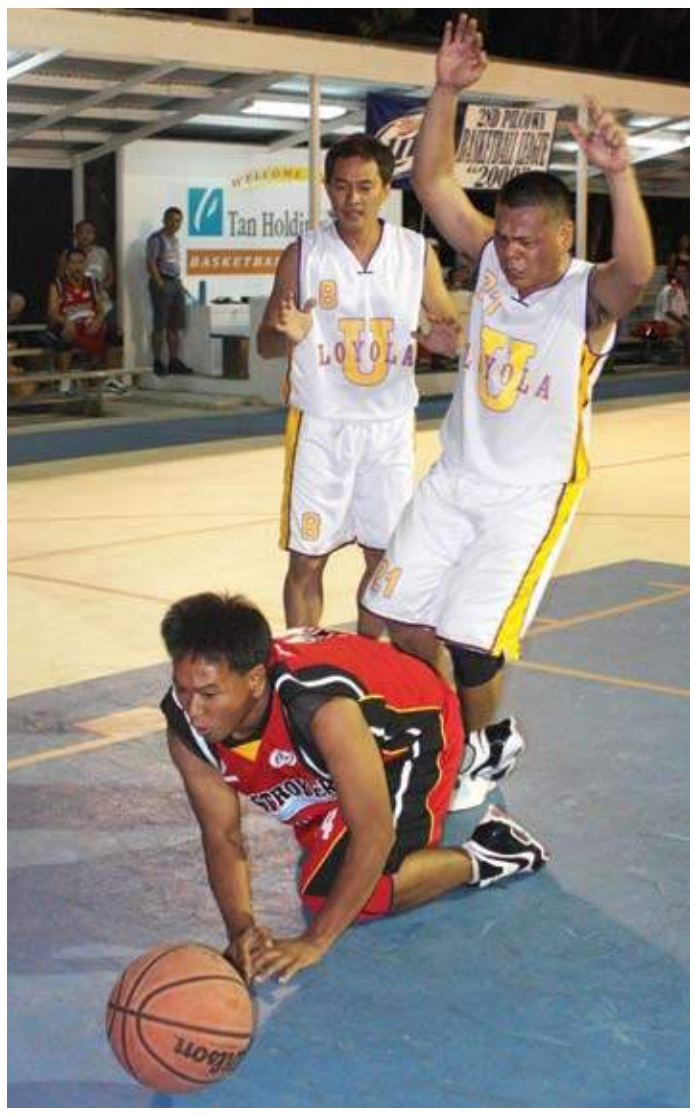
Scoring by quarters:19-21, 42-39, 70-64, 97-89.

Second game

Noni Saipan 95 – Demapan 16, Pantaleon 15, Bernardo 13, Abuel 12, Mortos 11, Castro 10, De Vero 9, Tamayo 8.

NCIC 72 – Tabora 15, L. Deleon Guerrero 15, Galarse 13, Lansang 12, Taylor 9, Javier 5, Ong 2.

Scoring by quarters: 24-17, 44-30, 69-39, 95-72.



Wushin Corp.'s Erlan Lansang loses the ball, while University of Loyola's Ariel Jinang and Mico Moran looks on during their game in the masters division of the PILCOWA caging on Thursday at the JP Centre Basketball Court.
ROSELYN B. MONROYO

McCOY

From Page 28

go-ahead TD with 3:14 and two timeouts left.

Could it be? Could they win it all without the winningest quarterback in college football history?

Ultimately, they couldn't. They needed McCoy more than ever after that.

Gilbert was sacked and fumbled, then threw interceptions on his final two drives. Texas lost 37-21, but the way Gilbert played under these circumstances—taking the first meaningful snaps of his career early in the BCS championship game against No. 1 Alabama, in front of 94,906 at the Rose Bowl—gave the Longhorns a few sweet memories along with the bitterness of failing to win it all and seeing McCoy's magnificent career end with pain and tears.

"I love this game, I have a passion for this game. I've done everything I can to contribute to this team and we made it this far," McCoy said. "I'd have given everything I had to be out there with my team."

Gilbert finished 15 of 40 for 186 yards with four interceptions and the fumble. He matched his completion total for the season (in mop-up duty over nine games, never against top foes) and the two TDs were the first two of his career. There's an interesting linking of the eras in the fact both went to Shipley, a sixth-year senior who arrived during Young's sophomore year.

"It's a tough experience, it's a humbling experience," Gilbert said. "It's something you're not going to forget. Guys told me they were proud of me. Throughout the game, Colt was telling me to stay calm. There wasn't much time to think about it. I got thrown in and knew I was going to be counted on by my teammates to step up."

McCoy was injured on Texas' opening drive, on just the fifth snap.

He kept the ball on an option to his left and was hit square by lineman Marcell Dareus for no gain. McCoy described it as a pinched nerve.

He tried throwing the ball in the locker room, but had no control. The once-wispy kid who proved durable enough to start 52 straight games, and won an NCAA-record 45, finally had an injury he couldn't shake off.

"I don't have lots of pain, that was never the issue," McCoy said. "My arm went numb. There's no telling where the ball would have gone if I would try to throw. ... It feels like I slept on my arm, woke up and it's dead."

Coach Mack Brown has long figured his program would be in good shape when McCoy gives way to Gilbert, who is bigger and has a stronger arm. However, he was counting on the transition coming one game and eight months later.

In the first half, Gilbert basically played like an 18-year-old whose best days are ahead of him. He had some good throws dropped, then forced a shovel pass into traffic in the closing seconds of the first half and saw it get intercepted and returned for a touchdown, sending the Longhorns into the locker room trailing 24-6.

"Just keep playing," Brown told Gilbert at halftime. "You're a good player. It's a hard learning curve; learn fast."

Indeed, Gilbert started showing some of the poise and precision that made him a high school superstar. Coincidence or not, the turnaround came after McCoy returned to the sideline, offering advice and encouragement.

When it was over and confetti was flying and Alabama players were celebrating, Gilbert stood about 35 yards away, watching with moist eyes. Shipley walked over, clapped him on the chest and said, "You did the best you could do. Be proud of that."

ALABAMA

From Page 28

knew what we can do."

They did, and brought back glory to one of the country's most storied programs, the football factory that Bear Bryant built. This one came courtesy of Nick Saban, who resurrected this team in the short span of three seasons.

"We back," said Heisman Trophy winner Mark Ingram, the offensive MVP.

Back for the first time since 1992, when Bryant's protege, Gene Stallings, led the Crimson Tide to its last national title. This one gives Alabama eight since the polls began in the 1930s. Its seventh Associated Press championship should be a shoo-in when the votes are tabulated.

Ingram finished with 116 yards rushing and two touchdowns, and Trent Richardson had 109 yards and two scores as Alabama beat Texas for the first time in nine meetings between two of college football's most successful teams.

Anders will go down with them in Crimson Tide lore, as will Marcell Dareus, who knocked McCoy—the winningest quarterback in college football history—down and out with an injury to his throwing shoulder on Texas' fifth offensive play.

"I just heard a thump when I hit him," Dareus said. "I did lay it down pretty hard. I didn't try to, but it felt great."

A bit later, Dareus picked off Gilbert's shovel pass and returned it 28 yards for a TD and a 24-6 lead late in the second quarter.

But it wasn't quite over.

"It was like we'd won the game at halftime," Saban said. "But you can't accept being average. You're playing a team in the national championship game that knows how to win."

The second half turned out to be anything but a laugher with Gilbert in the game—a highly recruited freshman who was Texas' "quarterback of the future" but had thrown only 26 college passes coming into this game.

He threw two touchdown passes to All-American Jordan Shipley to trim the deficit to 24-21 with 6:15 left, and after an Alabama punt, he had the ball at the 7-yard line, 93 yards away from one of the most improbable comeback stories in the history of the game.

But after an Alabama holding penalty moved the ball to the 17, Gilbert dropped back to pass and got rocked by Anders, a senior who plays in the shadow of Cody and fellow All-American Rolando McClain. The ball went flying and Courtney Upshaw recovered.

Three plays later, Ingram surged into the end zone from the 1 for a 10-point lead. A few minutes later, after Gilbert's third interception of the night, Richardson scored his second touchdown to make it 37-21.

Dareus finished with one tackle, one interception and one touchdown, but all were game-changers.

Seeking its second national title in five years, Texas (13-1) got to the game on the back of McCoy, its All-American quarterback, who often looked like a one-man show in leading the Longhorns to 13 straight wins.

After the injury, McCoy was asking to go back in to finish his last college game. His dad, interviewed on ABC, said the injury wasn't that bad.

But Texas coach Mack Brown decided to err on the side of caution, and McCoy spent the second half wearing a headset on the sideline, trying to encourage his teammates.

"I would have given anything to be out there because it would have been different," he said.

The Longhorns defense, ranked third in the country in yards allowed, kept things close while Gilbert got his feet underneath him.

And boy did he.

He led the Longhorns on a five-play, 59-yard drive to make it 24-13, then 60 yards for the second score, and suddenly, the Tide was falling apart, not rolling. The 2-point conversion made it 24-21.

"It's a hard learning curve but he learned fast," Brown said. "At one point, I thought he was going to win the ballgame."

The Tide, however, hung on and Saban became the first coach since the polls began in 1936 to win national titles with two schools. He won the 2003 BCS championship with LSU.

The program was grounded, of course, in the hardscrabble work-ethic brought to Tuscaloosa in the 1960s by The Bear, who roamed the sideline in his houndstooth hat and painted the quintessential portrait of a football coach in those days.

His legacy still permeates almost everything at Alabama and it was Saban, who took over a program decimated by scandals, bad decisions and NCAA troubles over the past decade, who convinced the Tide faithful they had to let go of the past if they were ever going to enjoy the present.

It took him just three short years, and now 'Bama is back.

"I think there's a lot of people who are responsible for that," Saban said. "Our administration made a commitment to rebuild Alabama, to do something everyone could be proud of."

INGRAM

From Page 28

a great competitor and he certainly wanted to go back in the game and we certainly needed him to. It worked out for us."

While the defense made an assortment of big plays against Texas, Ingram and backfield mate Trent Richardson carried the offense.

Richardson, a freshman, ran for 109 yards and two TDs, and the two tailbacks did it against a defense that had allowed just 62 yards rushing per game coming in. It was only the 11th time in school history that two Crimson Tide running backs have run for 100 yards and the first time it happened in a bowl game.

But it was Ingram, as usual, standing in the spotlight with the game on the line. His eighth 100-yard rushing effort tied Shaun Alexander's decade-old single-season record, and his two touchdowns gave him 17 on the season.

Ingram was more than happy to share carries with Richardson, though.

"It helps us tremendously to elevate our game to tremendous levels," he said. "It's going to be nothing but headaches for the defenses in the next year or two."

Knicks hit 6 3s in 4th quarter to edge Bobcats

Chris Duhon made the tiebreaking 3-pointer with 2:03 left, Danilo Gallinari followed with two more, and the New York Knicks pulled out a 97-93 victory over the Charlotte Bobcats on Thursday night. 25

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Crucial win for Wushin; Noni routs NCIC

Wushin Corp. notched an important victory over University of Loyola, 97-89, on Thursday night at the JP Centre Basketball Court, boosting the former's playoffs chances in the 2009 PILCOWA Basketball League. 27

No. 1 Alabama beats No. 2 Texas

Crimson Tide defuses gallant Longhorns comeback, 37-21

By EDDIE PELLS
AP NATIONAL WRITER

PASADENA, Calif. (AP)—First, the Alabama defense knocked Colt McCoy out of the game. Later, it saved a national championship.

Hanging onto a precarious three-point lead and with momentum on the other side, linebacker Eryk Anders was determined not to let the BCS title slip away.

Anders forced a fumble on his blindside sack of Texas backup quarterback Garrett Gilbert with 3:02 left Thursday night to help the top-ranked Crimson Tide hold on for a 37-21 victory - a win that figured to be much easier when McCoy went out with a shoulder injury early in the first quarter.

"We said, 'It's on us, the defensive line,'" Alabama's 350-pound All-American Terrence Cody said. "We had to make plays to finish it off. There was no doubt in our huddle. We

See ALABAMA on Page 27

AP

Alabama head coach Nick Saban holds the championship trophy after winning the BCS Championship NCAA college football game against Texas in Pasadena, Calif., Thursday, Jan. 7, 2010.

AP

Texas quarterback Colt McCoy stands on the sidelines during the third quarter of the BCS Championship NCAA college football game against Alabama in Pasadena, Calif., Thursday, Jan. 7, 2010.

McCoy-Gilbert transition comes early for Longhorns

By JAIME ARON
AP SPORTS WRITER

PASADENA, Calif. (AP)—Colt McCoy had 60 minutes left to cap his incredible career with the only accomplishment he really ever cared about, a national championship.

Four minutes into the big game, he was done—KO'd by a shoulder injury. By the time he returned to the sideline, his Texas Longhorns seemed out of it, too—trailing by three scores in the third quarter.

Then McCoy traded his helmet for a headset and something stunning happened. His 18-year-old replacement started playing like, well, a combination of McCoy and his predecessor, Vince Young, who also was watching from the sideline.

Garrett Gilbert revived Texas' championship hopes the way McCoy would've, picking up crucial first downs and throwing deep to Jordan Shipley. They hooked up on a 44-yard touchdown play, then a 28-yarder. Then the kid nailed a 2-point conversion pass and the Longhorns were down by only a field goal with 6:25 left. Then Alabama punted and the Longhorns were 93 yards from a

See McCOY on Page 27

Ingram pulls double whammy: Heisman, BCS *title*

By JOHN ZENOR
AP SPORTS WRITER

PASADENA, Calif. (AP)—Mark Ingram ran right over that Heisman Trophy jinx.

Turning in a workmanlike performance with a few timely plays, the Alabama tailback carried 22 times for 116 yards and two touchdowns Thursday night in a 37-21 victory over Texas in the BCS national title game.

With his mother watching from the stands—and his famous father still in jail—Ingram became only the second player to win college football's most prestigious individual award and a national title in the same season since the inception of the BCS, joining Southern California quarterback Matt Leinart.

Ingram didn't match his tearfully poignant Heisman acceptance speech, when he became the first player in the history of the storied Alabama program to win the award. But he made it clear that the crystal football given to the national champions was more meaningful than the bronze trophy he received in New York.

"The Heisman was kind of shocking and something I never really expected coming into this year," said Ingram, voted the game's most outstanding offensive player. "It was a great honor to win the trophy but it was more than just a trophy, too. It was overcoming adversity. A lot of the emotion came from that.

Alabama running back Mark Ingram signals to spectators after scoring a touchdown during the fourth quarter of the BCS Championship NCAA college football game against Alabama in Pasadena, Calif., Thursday, Jan. 7, 2010.

AP

"This national championship was more everybody. I was so happy to leave my heart out there for the team, and blood, sweat and tears."

That adversity includes his father Mark Sr.'s imprisonment on a money laundering and bank fraud conviction. The former New York Giants and Miami Dolphins wide receiver was sentenced to 92 months but could have time tacked on for failing to report to a federal prison in Kentucky in December 2008, apparently because he wanted to see his son play in the Sugar Bowl.

Sidelined briefly by leg cramps, Ingram returned to the game just in time Thursday night to help polish off a 14-0 season for Alabama.

"Mark has great competitive character," coach Nick Saban said. "He was cramping up a little bit in the game. He's

See INGRAM on Page 27